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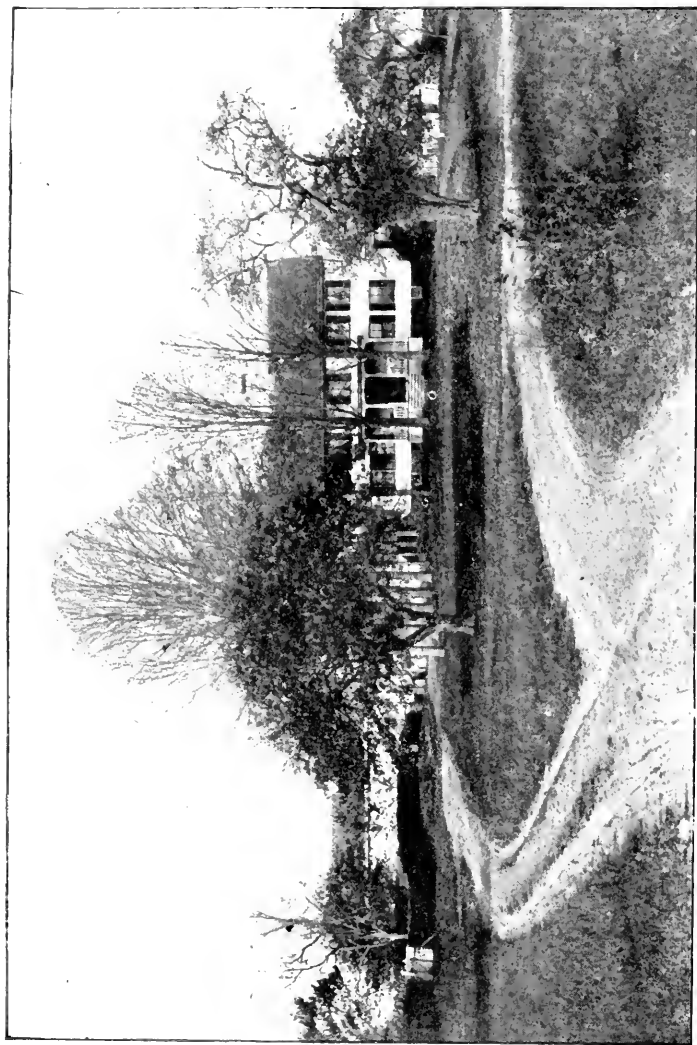












BIRTHPLACE OF THE AUTHOR.

# The Homes of our Ancestors

IN

STONINGTON, CONN.

BY

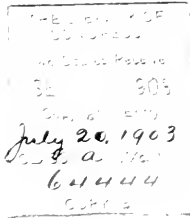
GRACE DENISON WHEELER

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SALEM, MASS.

NEWCOMB & GAUSS, PRINTERS.

1903.



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BY

GRACE DENISON WHEELER.

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TO

**My Father and Mother,**

WITH MANY PLEASANT MEMORIES OF TWILIGHT TALKS  
AND MID-DAY DRIVES AMONG THE HILLS AND  
VALES OF STONINGTON.



## PREFACE.

All my life, I have heard and enjoyed the incidents and anecdotes, connected with the old houses referred to within this book, and believing that others would appreciate them also, I have endeavored to arrange them for publication, and most sincerely thank all the friends who have so kindly helped to make this work possible. I trust all errors and omissions will be pardoned, and that it will prove acceptable, as it is intended to be a companion book to my father's "History of Stonington," which was devoid of illustrations.

GRACE DENISON WHEELER.



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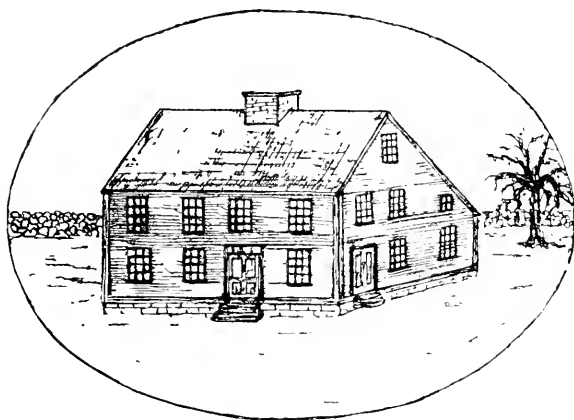
## OLD HOMES IN STONINGTON.

Old Homesteads sacred to all that can  
Gladden or sadden the heart of man,  
Over whose thresholds of oak and stone  
Life and death have come and gone.

—*Whittier.*

When our ancestors came to Stonington to live, they certainly chose the most beautiful places in the whole town to locate themselves, at Pawcatuck Rock, Wequetequock and Quiambug Cove, Mystic and Quaquatang. We notice they settled usually on land near the water and for very good reasons: in the water was fish of many kinds, while on the shore, clams could be found and above the water were sea-gulls and wild ducks. On the low land near by could be cut the marsh hay for their cattle which they had brought with them, as we see by the deed to Walter Palmer from ex-Gov. Haynes in 1653. We know that the landscape did not present the same appearance then, that it does now, but the same sun threw its lights and shadows over hill and valley and brightened the sparkling waters or darkened them as the clouds passed over. The same wind blew its gentle zephyrs in summer and gales in winter. The ebb and flow of the tide, seemingly controlled by the moon, was watched then as now at Wequetequock Cove, where William Chesebrough, blacksmith and gunsmith in the summer of 1649, built the first house in Stonington, not far from the present residence of Mr. Irtis Maine, on the west bank and overlooking the Cove, and brought his wife and four sons there to live. There is no record left of the style or appearance of this house, but it was probably a log house as were most of those of the early settlers.

Some years after, frame houses were built of heavy oak timbers, half a yard wide, the rafters were much larger than those of our modern houses and the sides of the houses were covered with oak clapboards, smoothed with a shaving knife. Within, only the sides of the rooms, which were about seven feet high, were plastered. The floor was of oak plank. The windows consisted of two small frames, set with diamond shaped panes, fastened by hinges, that were secured to the side of the house. The outer doors were of double oaken plank with spikes driven into them and fastened at night by heavy wooden bars which rendered secure the inmates through the night.



THOMAS STANTON HOUSE.

Mr. Thomas Stanton obtained land at Pawcatuck in 1650 and built his trading-house or store there in 1651 and his house before 1657, in a beautiful spot near the river, but a short distance from the present home of Mr. Charles Randall, where now by the road-side can be seen two grand old elm trees. After a few years he rebuilt it in the same place (with perhaps some of the same wood), which stood there till a short time since. I am indebted to Mrs. Harriet Stanton for the following sketch of her ancestor's dwellingplace.—“The frame of this house



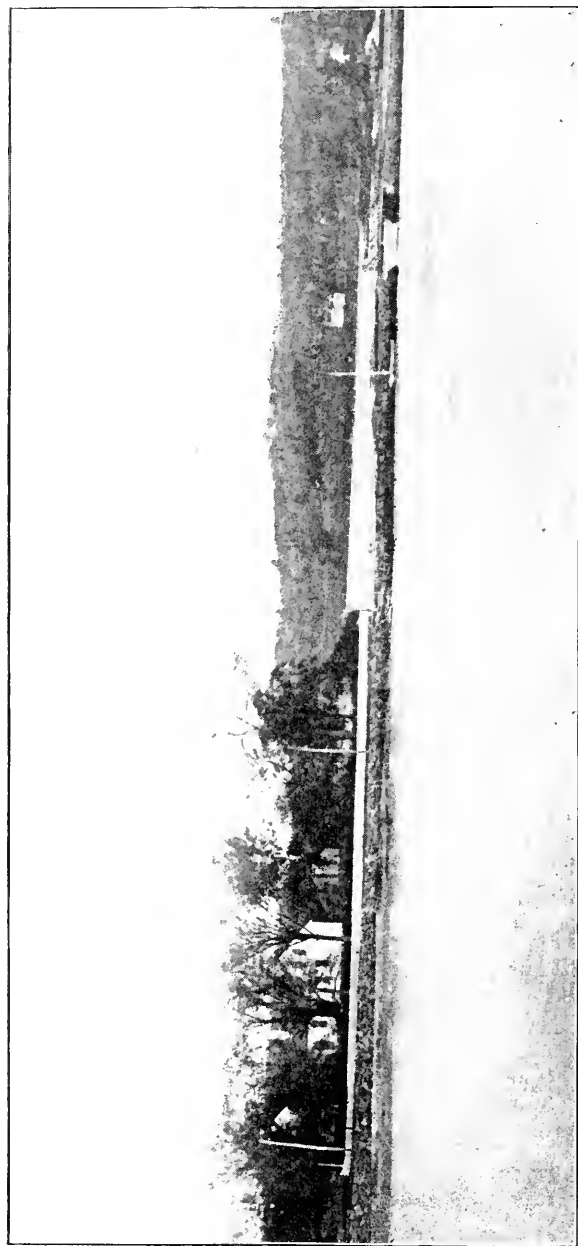
was largely of oak, with window frames of sassafras. It was built in two sections, the west side being added a generation or so later. It was two stories in the main part with a steep roof and fronted to the south, the lower story was seven feet in height and the upper story six feet. On the north side was a lean-to some fifteen feet wide, which extended on the east or earliest built portion including the chimney, its roof being a continuation of that on the main building and sloping low down to the top of the door and window on the north side. From the center rose the large chimney, ten or twelve feet square at the base, with fire-places on the sides and rear. South of the chimney was the front entry, which, including the stairway, was about ten by twelve feet. Doors on either side opened into the front rooms; these doors as well as the outer ones were surmounted by open spaces carved in the wood in scroll pattern and provided with swinging shutters for cold weather. The outer door was very large and heavy and was fastened by a wooden latch of adequate proportions. Stairs on the left, led by two turns or landings, which were divided from corner to corner, to a passage over the entry below, from which at the right and left, doors opened into the east and west chambers and these rooms were of the same size as the rooms on the first floor. The upper entry was lighted by a window in the center, over the front door. Open stairs of oak led to the garret above, which was lighted by a window in each end. The front stairs were of pine, as well as the balustrade, which was fashioned by hand work. The windows were large and high and the panes of glass, small. Including the garret, there were six rooms in the main structure. The west room, above and below was lighted by four windows, two at the south and two at the west. The east room, which was not so large, had one window to the south and a door and window at the east below, and three windows in the room above. All these rooms were provided with ample fire-places. The kitchen occupied the west end of the lean-to with doors opening into the east front room

and out doors at the north, with one window also to the north. On the west side was an open stairway, made in ladder shape, which led to the room above; this room occupied the space of the kitchen, bedroom and pantry below and the roof slanted down to the floor on the north side, it had a fire-place and was the domain of the blacks. In the floor of this lean-to was a trap door, leading by steps to a square excavation: in this place valuables of the family were stored for safety at various times: once in the time of King Philip's war in 1675, and the back-logs were placed over the opening to conceal it. East of the kitchen was a square bedroom opening out of the front room, with one window to the east, and back of this bedroom was a buttery (a dark room with shelves). There were also closets in both front rooms, made by the slope of the chimney with the upper part in open buffet style. The fire-places were deep caverns, the jamb and back being at right angles to each other and the hearth stones. In the sides of the living room, hanging on spikes, driven into pieces of wood, built into the structure for that purpose, were the long-handled frying pans, the pot hooks, the boring iron, the branding iron, the long iron peel, the roasting hook, the fire pan, the scoop-shaped fire shovel, with a trivet or two. The stout slice and tongs leaned against the jambs in front: in the best room, these were surmounted with brass to match the fire dogs or andirons and were accompanied by a bellows. In the living room all these were of iron. In one end of the fire-place was the oven, its mouth flush with the back of the fire-place and closed with an iron door. In this nook, when the oven was not in use, stood a square oaken block or bench, on which the children could sit and study the catechism and spelling book by the light of the fire, or watch the stars through the square tower above their heads, their view unobstructed, save by the black, shiny lug-pole and its great trammel, or in their season its burden of hams and fletches of pork and venison, hanging to be cured in the smoke. The mantle tree in the living-room was a huge beam of oak while in the front

room and chambers was a pine shelf and panel work of the same wood : behind these were small closets, in which was stored the choice crockery ware, pewter and silver, brought from England. In these rooms fires were seldom built except at weddings, funerals and state occasions. Here lived generation after generation in a direct line from the first settlement until about 1883, when the old house, much decayed, was taken down to make room for a new road which was laid out to pass directly over its site."

Thomas Stanton's son Thomas, with his wife, who was the daughter of Capt. George Denison by his first wife Bridget Thompson, also lived here and his daughter Dorothy Stanton grew up in this old house, which was quite near to their "Trading House," the only commercial place in the whole region. She became acquainted with a young man named Nicholas Lynde, who was supercargo of a vessel which traded along this coast, and they were married in 1696. While on a voyage to the West Indies he died, in 1703, and after a little time Mrs. Lynde with her two children went to live with their grandfather, Col. Joseph Lynde in Charlestown, Mass., and there the mother married second, John Trefice, in 1708, a widower forty years older than herself: after his death she married Samuel Frink Sr., of Stonington, and had one child, William, born in 1711. Mr. Frink dying in 1713, she married again in 1718 her cousin, Robert Denison, and lived at Montville, Ct. Their oldest child they named George Denison after their distinguished grandfather, Capt. George, and the daughter was named Dorothy. Mrs. Denison lived until she was 105 years old.

In 1652, Mr. Thomas Miner built his house on the east bank of Wequetequock Cove, just a little distance north of the old Fish house, now owned by the Road Cong. Society. In this same house Mr. Walter Palmer came to live in 1653, as his daughter Grace had married Mr. Miner. There is nothing now to show the site of this house, except a slight depression in the ground. Soon after Mr. Palmer came here to live, Mr. Miner



THE THOMAS MINER PLACE IN QUIMBAUG.

"By permission of Sidney H. Miner and George D. Stanton, publishers of the Thomas Miner Diary."

moved to Quiambang and built a new house, facing the south, just east of the present residence of Mr. Cornelius Miner and near the blue waters of this Cove: a little hollow in the ground and a few old stone steps, with a long row of lilaes which are said to have been brought from England, are the only marks left of the old home of Thomas Miner which was situated on land purchased of Cary Latham of New London.

Captain John Gallup chose the east side of Sicanemus or Mystic River, on which to build his house in 1654, quite near the Dea. Warren Lewis house, between Greenmanville and the cemetery. Capt. Gallup's house was double, two stories in front and one in the rear. It faced the south and had a slanting roof. The walls were of heavy timbers and the few windows were small, high and narrow. The great chimney was in the center, with fire-places opening into three large rooms on the first floor, and four upon the second. The second story projected beyond the lower, and deep cellars were below the house for storing the winter provisions. The mortar was made of moss mixed with clay, while some of the other old houses had the cellar mortared with sea-weed mixed with oyster shells.

Captain George Denison went inland a little, but yet where he could overlook the water, and built his house in 1654 a little west of the present old Denison house occupied now by Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Ford. This first house was built of logs, afterwards he built a larger one, called the Mansion House and gave it to his son William, whose son George built the present one. Capt. George built a palisaded fort west of this house (parts of which can still be seen), where he mustered in the volunteers who went under his command to the famous swamp fight in 1676. He was also Provost-Marshal of the forces east of the river Thames, who pursued the Narragansett and Wampanaug Indians, defeated them, and brought the Indian Chief, Canonchet to Anguilla in Stonington, who after refusing to make peace with the English, which was offered him, was shot by order of the officer in command just west of Anguilla, near the old

Indian burying ground, which is still protected with apple trees and bushes, which have grown and encircled the graves on this hillside. Here, also, Major John Mason held his council of war and after consulting with Oneco and other Indian Chiefs, decided upon the mode of attack on the Pequots, at Mystic Hill, which site is now well marked by a statue representing Captain Mason in his soldier's attire.

The following is a copy of a letter sent by Capt. George Denison to his first wife, Bridget Thompson, in 1640.

It is an ordinance, my dear, divine  
Which God unto the sons of men makes shine  
Even marriage is that whereof I speak  
And unto you my mind therein I beak  
In Paradise, of Adam, God did tell  
To be alone, for man, would not be well  
He in His wisdom thought it right  
To bring a woman into Adam's sight  
A helper that for him might be most mete  
And comfort him by her doing discreet  
I of that stock am sprung, I mean from him  
And also of that tree I am a limb  
A branch though young, yet do I think it good  
That God's great vows by man be not withstood  
Alone I am, an helper I would find  
Which might give satisfaction to my mind  
The party that doth satisfy the same  
Is Mistress Bridget Thompson by her name.  
God having drawn my affections unto thee  
My heart's desire is thine may be to me  
Thus with my blottings though I trouble you  
Yet pass these by because I know not how  
Though they at this time should much better be  
For love it is the first have been to thee  
And I could wish that they much better were  
Therefore I pray accept them as they are  
So hoping my desire I shall obtain  
Your own true lover I, George Denison by name

From my father's house in Roxbury  
To Miss Bridget Thompson, Stonington, 1640.

Captain Robert Park's house, built by him in 1655, was on the western slope of Quaquinaug Hill, commanding a grand view of hill and valley and the winding water of Mystic River.

Mr. John Shaw came to Pawcatuck about this same time but it is not known where he built his house. His son afterwards lived at Tangwonk, where Mr. Latham Miner once lived.



ROAD MEETING-HOUSE.

Within a few years Josiah Witter, John Searles, Edmund Fanning, James York and still others, came to Stonington and settled, till in 1668 there were forty-three heads of families in town. The little cluster of houses at the Road, with the Church and schoolhouse, is a gentle reminder of those early days, when in 1667 the planters of the town appointed a committee to lay out Home Lots for each inhabitant. These lots contained twelve

acres each and were situated upon each side of the ministry land which was on Agreement Hill, where the Road Meeting house now stands, (called so because the first road that was travelled in this town passed through the town plat and by the old Meeting House on Agreement Hill where all the town gatherings were held and public meetings transacted.)

The present structure was built in 1829 and is unchanged except that the high, mahogany, circular pulpit has been replaced by a modern platform and desk. The first pulpit was supported by slender, wooden pillars and was so high that chairs could be placed underneath. It was reached by stairs on either side, and back of the minister were long, crimson, satin damask curtains, draped away and held in place by heavy cord and tassels of the same color. The large cushion, on which the Bible rested, was also draped with the same material and heavy tassels hung from the corners. About 1855, this pulpit and draperies were removed and a large solid pulpit took its place, which remained till the gift of the present one by Mrs. Charles S. Hull. Swinging baize doors fill the places of the former wooden ones. A simple chandelier is suspended from the ceiling and a furnace affords warmth instead of the two large stoves with their long pipes which used to extend the entire length of the room. The pews are high, painted white with cherry railings at the top and closed by doors which are fastened by small wooden buttons. Either side of the pulpit are the doors to the body of the church, entering which, you face the congregation and upon seating yourself, find the minister is before you. In plain sight of all hangs the State motto, "He who transplanteth still sustains," while above the pulpit is a velvet tablet with the three dates thereon, 1657, 1674 and 1874. The first represents the earliest religious service in the town at the house of Walter Palmer in Wequetequoock by the Rev. William Thompson of Braintree, Mass. (brother-in-law of Capt. George Denison), who at the time was a missionary to the Pequot Indians. Afterwards the planters built a meeting house a little south-



west of Mr. Henry M. Palmer's house on Montauk Avenue. It was raised May 16th, 1661, and in September the Commissioners of the United Colonies attended religious worship there, led by Capt. John Mason. It is not known how large the house was, or its style, but probably it was a small building, for six years after the town records a vote that was passed to repair it and make it more comfortable. Several ministers taught here till in 1664, when Mr. James Noyes of Newbury, Mass., accepted the invitation to become their Gospel preaching minister and remained till his death in 1719.

He was paid at first, a salary of £50 currency (or \$166.66) annually, and it was agreed to give liberally towards building him a house, which was situated between Anguilla and Noyes Brook, where the present red house stands. We can draw upon our imagination to the utmost in making a mental picture of this new home and its surroundings, but it is only known that the house was large, two stories in front and one in the rear. The distance to his first church, on Montauk Ave. was nearly five miles and we can almost see him on a Sunday morning, setting forth on horseback, with his fair young bride, Dorothy Stanton, on a pillion behind him, for their ride across the hills and valleys, on what was then an Indian path, till the road was laid out in 1669 from Pawcatuck Bridge to the Ferry, and after the solemn and impressive religious service turning their horse's head to the east and riding back, when the shadows began to lengthen (for then the meeting lasted most of the day), to this first parsonage in the town, standing at that time, in almost a forest, and seeming quite unlike the pleasant, country fields and roads where now commodious houses, barns and many modern improvements can be seen, upon a drive through this same locality. After a time, Mr. Noyes had the use of the ministry land and his salary was raised to £100 with several grants of land. During his pastorate here of 55 years and 6 months, he baptized 1176 persons. He was a distinguished preacher and was one of the founders of Yale College. The

old Church records speak thus of him, "He lived much desired and died much lamented." In 1670 the inhabitants having decided to build a new meeting-house, met and looked over the ministry land (500 acres of which had been set apart by the town and 200 laid out about Agreement Hill for the support of the ministry). After several meetings they unanimously agreed upon a location for the new house, and then went back to the old meeting-house and voted, "That the new meeting house shall for time to come, be set up and stand, without removing, upon Agreement Hill." At that time the hill was covered with heavy timber, which was removed by voluntary labor, and the house built by subscriptions of timber, planking, shingles, nails and labor of men and teams. The meeting-house was raised Jan., 1673, and a church formally organized June 3rd, 1674, with only nine persons enrolled as members, viz., Mr. James Noyes, who lived at Anguilla, Mr. Thomas Stanton and son, Thomas Jr., who lived at Pawcatuck Rock, Mr. Nathaniel Chesebrough, lived opposite the Phelps place. Mr. Thomas Miner at Quiambaug, Mr. Nehemiah Palmer lived with his father, Walter, at Wequetequock, Mr. Ephriam Miner, who lived north of Mr. Sanford Billings' house, Mr. Moses Palmer, who lived on the east side of Wequetequock Cove, below the Road Society land, which house has been taken down within the last thirty years, and Mr. Thomas Wheeler, who lived at Col. James F. Brown's in the old Wheeler house. It is not known when this church was finished or dedicated, but religious services were held in the summer of 1673 in this building, which stood a few rods west of the present meeting-house at the Road. It was built by Israel Smith, the cost of labor being £51. There is no plan of this building on record, except the dimensions, which were 40 ft. long, 22 ft. wide, and 14 ft. posts from joint to joint. There were no slips or pews, except for the deacons, magistrates and minister's family; benches were used by the people, and a committee was appointed to seat them, according to their notions of propriety, but this did not last long,

as the next year the town voted "To have the floor of the house and of the gallery assigned to the inhabitants for pews." The inside of the house was never lathed or plastered, or the outside painted or adorned with a steeple. After the pews were built, the space between them and the gallery was ceiled. In those days, meeting-houses were built without stoves or fire-places and must have been uncomfortably cold in winter, but for the little foot-warmer of iron, with door to open, showing a pan in which hot coals were placed. This was carried to meeting and passed from one part of the slip to the other, to lessen in some degree the intense cold. In 1690 the town voted "To build near the church a small house, fourteen feet square, with seven feet posts and fire-place for Mr. Noyes to warm himself in cold weather, between meetings," for then there was morning and afternoon service and many, besides the minister, remained over till afternoon. At this time, one can but imagine that many pleasant and cordial greetings were exchanged and matters that were not strictly religious were discussed. This early custom of expressing hearty interest in one another has lingered even to the present time, when after service a very babel of tongues is heard in the hall and a joyous laugh does not shock the ears of pastor or people. The men gather in little groups between the church and sheds, while hearty hand shakes evince their good will towards each other.

In 1717, the society had so extended and the population increased to such an extent, that the old meeting-house was too small to accommodate all the people, so they voted to divide the town into two societies (the east and west), but no definite action was taken till 1726, when a vote was carried to build a new meeting-house at the center of the town, or Putnam's Corners, sixty-one persons favoring that location, but many others preferring the old site at Agreement Hill, there arose heated discussions and each society commenced preparations for building their new meeting-houses. The land on which the house at the Center stood was given by Mr. Elihu Chesebrough,

April 18th, 1728, and under date of Jan. ye 2nd, 1730, is a list which shows, "What particular men gave towards building this house." Capt. Thomas Noyes gave £60, Mrs. Noyes, his mother gave £20, Deacon Noyes, £50, Justice Palmer, £70, Deacon Palmer, £40, Capt. Palmer, £30, Mr. Joseph Miner, £50, Insign Breed, £20, Samuel Hinekley, £26, Stephen Richardson, £25, William Stanton, £35, William Bell, £10, Nathan Chesebrough, £40, and his mother, £10, Elihu Chesebrough, besides the land, £40, Lieut. Samuel Chesebrough, £35, Mrs. Grace Palmer, £70, John Denison, £20. Total—£589. This house at the Center was larger than the other. It was unpainted and had no steeple. There were three outside doors and two tiers of galleries, one above the other, and an immense sounding board above the speaker's head. The eight seats in front of the pulpit were each four feet long, forty-one pews were nearly square and those all around the sides were divided from the center ones by the alley which was four feet wide. The main alley or aisle was five feet wide. This house was finished in 1740, and it was here that the famous George Whitefield preached the afternoon of July 16th, 1747, and so many people came to hear him that he left the house and spoke to them from a platform erected under the shade of a large elm tree near the church, which is still standing, and the children of the Revolution have placed a placard upon it with this historic event inscribed thereon. This church remained here till 1786 when it was taken down and removed to Stonington Borough and rebuilt near the late residence of Mr. Horace N. Trumbull. It was then painted and called the White meeting-house.

The new meeting-house, begun at the Road in 1729, was not finished for ten years. It stood a little farther to the southwest than the present one and faced the south. It was built of pine, white wood and cedar, was never painted and had no steeple. The inside was ceiled but never lathed or plastered; the windows, two above and below, on the north and south

sides, and three above and below, on the east and west sides, were small and had small panes of glass. There were three outside doors, the east and west ones were narrow, but the south door was double and opened into the main body of the house, directly under the high pulpit which faced the north and was seven or eight feet from the floor, reached by steps leading up on either side. Like the Center Church, a large wooden sounding-board was suspended above the minister's head, so that his voice could be heard in all parts of the house. The two long seats just in front of the pulpit had backs and were used by the magistrates and deacons. The body of the house had six large, high, square pews, with uncushioned seats on three sides but none on the side facing the pulpit, and sometimes high backed chairs were placed in them also. These pews opened without doors into the two broad aisles, which run the length of the building, and on either side of these were four pews of the same style, except that the two which adjoined the short aisle from the east and west entrances, had doors. In plain view of all in the house were the stairs on either side of the pulpit, leading up into the gallery, which extended around three sides, the choir occupying the north side, facing the minister, though sometimes they sat all around the gallery, the men on one side and the women on the other.

In those days no music was heard except the tuning fork or pitch pipe used by Mr. Zebulon Chesebrough to start the tunes, and the voices from all over the house, led by the choir, sang the words, which were lined off by the minister or leader. Usually two lines were read at a time and then sung, thus the melody was carried along. There were many sweet singers in that old church, some of whose names have been told to the children of the present generation. We see among the men, Uncle Zebbe Chesebrough, Mr. John Dean and Mr. Jesse Dean, while on the other side were Miss Debby Denison (the beauty of Quiambaug), Mary Palmer, Mary Stanton, Mr. Zebbe Chesebrough's daughter, with her heavy contralto voice, and that sweet

singer Phannee Dean, who came with her brother, Jesse, and a large number of goodly young people from Dean's Mills, which was then the business center of the town.

At this time few carriages were owned in town, so the people came to meeting on horseback, or on foot, and on a pleasant Sunday morning many young-men and maidens could be seen walking and carrying their best shoes, to put on just before arriving at the door, while the travel-stained ones were safely hid away behind some friendly rock or tree, to be put on again after meeting, for the journey homeward. For about forty years these two societies acted wholly independent of each other, Mr. Ebenezer Rossiter having been the pastor at the time of the division, continued to preach in the First or West Church in that society, and Rev. Nathaniel Eells became the pastor of the First or East Church in that society and so continued till Mr. Rossiter's death, when in a short time both societies called Mr. Eells to become their minister, so after a separation of thirty-four years, they were again re-united with Mr. Eells preaching alternately for six months in each meeting-house for several years.

In 1782 the church on Agreement Hill having stood for about forty years, needed repairs and it was voted "that it be covered, have new doors and windows, and a committee was appointed to make the repairs, and if necessary to sell the East meeting-house to make repairs on the West one at Agreement Hill, but it was afterwards voted to repair it by subscription, so the old house was thoroughly renovated inside and out, under the supervision of Mr. Gilbert Fanning. As the town gave the land on which the church stood, it had the right to hold the King's Court and the Magistrate's Court in the meeting-house from the time the first church was built till 1828, when arrangements were made with the town authorities to build the basement of the present building for town purposes and the society to build the meeting-house for religious purposes alone, which use has been faithfully adhered to, as the town meetings are yet held in the basement. Mr. Henry Smith

took the contract to build and erected the present house, using some of the timbers and posts which were in the old church: these can still be seen on the east and west sides of this building. The Road Church is still the center of happy influences and many a son and daughter gone into other church homes recalls with joy and pride, this dear old mother church, which has for her motto, "He who transplanteth still sustains."

He who transplanted has sustained  
This Church through centuries,  
And saints, tho' dead, yet speak to us,  
In holy memories.

He who transplanted still sustains,  
Upon Agreement Hill,  
His children, who are striving here  
To do his holy will.

He who transplanted will sustain  
For ages yet to come,  
Till many a faithful one shall hear  
The plaudit of "Well Done."

## CHAPTER TWO.

Who saith, "I am a farmer," doth proclaim  
A noble calling with an humble name.

Nearly all the early planters who came here sprang from the better classes, and a large proportion of them from the landed gentry of England, and could trace their descent backward through a line of knights and gentlemen, and many had occupations other than to till the soil, but when they were once here, they soon learned from the necessity of the case to labor with their hands and cultivate their lands, for laborers were few, and as they had no money to procure carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers and weavers, it was plain that they must do this work themselves, so the very men, who were magistrates, governors and sons of governors, became stone-cutters, plied the shuttle or labored in the field, and were proud to do it, and Stonington was no exception, for almost their first legal act was to meet and lay out "home lots" of 12 acres each for every inhabitant, about the site of their new meeting-house, extending as far east as Stoney Brook and south to Fellows Mill, now belonging to Sylvia and Vargus. One tier was located north and the remainder west and south of the ministry land. The title to these "home lots" was obtained by lottery on condition that if built upon within six months and inhabited, the title would be complete, except that each one must reside on his lot two years before he could sell it, and then he must first offer it to the town and be refused before he could sell it, with good title, to any one. It is not known how many of these home lots were built upon, but even now the old family names are handed



down to the seventh and eight generations, and some of the old houses are standing yet which were built there about 1700.

Only a few years ago the old Tavern was taken down which stood across the road from the church. It was supposed to have been built about the middle of 1700 by Mr. Daniel Collins, and was a large, double, wood-colored house, with roof sloping nearly down to the ground at the rear, and two stories in front. Being built in this manner, they were exempt from taxation by the king, as all double two story houses had a tax imposed upon



THE TAVERN HOUSE.

them. At the west corner of this house, in plain view from the road, hung a swinging sign, ornamented by the figure of an Indian and having the word Tavern thereon. As you entered the front door, the stairs to go above and below were in plain sight. At the right was the great east room, which was the favorite resort for friends upon the Sabbath day, before meeting begun, or when any gathering was held at the Road, to meet and visit with each other or discuss matters of interest. At the rear of the room, with a small bedroom at either end, was the long kitchen, while in a large room upstairs, occasionally dances were held. At the

left of the front door, was a smaller room with a fire-place in it and windows at the south and west sides, which was called the "Bar Room." On the north side of this room, was the counter running east and west, completely shutting off the narrow room where was kept the jugs of West India rum, sugar, tea and decanters of various kinds of liquors. A red-painted door, suspended from the ceiling, was lifted or closed at will by the person behind the counter, and it was supported by two long, narrow sticks, arranged to hold it in position. In those days even the minister and people regaled themselves and no one was considered hospitable, who did not offer to his guest some good rum, home made wine or cider.

This Tavern was kept for years by Lient. Daniel Collins, who was in the Revolutionary War; at another time by Mr. Dean Gallup, again by a Mr. Rowse who was a tailor, and also by Mr. Gilbert Collins and Mr. Justin Denison. About 1835 by Mr. Nathan S. Noyes, and even then travellers were kept over night and the bar was sustained. Later, Mr. Frank Pendleton kept it as a Tavern (whose descendants live in Pennsylvania). At the time of the September gale the roof was blown off into the garden, but being replaced it was afterwards occupied by many different families. Receiving no special care, it fell gradually into decay, and was at last used as a barn and finally taken down by Mr. Charles S. Noyes about 1892, as he had purchased the property some years before.

About the "Road," in those early times, were several stores, one at the west of the "Tavern" where various goods were kept for sale, and a little further to the east was another, while near the house of Mr. Thomas Palmer, was still another: all of these were real old-fashioned country stores with a variety of everything one would need, as then the present villages which are about us were not in existence, and the people were largely supplied from these country stores, strange as it now seems.

I here insert a letter from the pen of one of Stonington's inhabitants of a century ago, who lived at the farm now occupied by Dea. B. Frank Williams, near Mystic, Ct.

My Dear Julia, a letter from your father informs me that you have fled from the heat, dust and turmoil of city life to make your Saratoga sojourn in the Stoney land of Stonington, and so there in that fairy region of rich men, pretty girls and early marriages, smooth fields, stone walls, and rural dwellings, brown bread, baked beans, whortleberries, fresh fish and honey, you, for a time are luxuriating, perhaps in the shade of some of those noble old Button-balls, Oaks and Chestnuts, the very trees under which I used to sit in days of yore, and build those airy castles of future happiness unalloyed, which in the rosy days of youth, untaught by time's changeful hand, have in all ages, been wont to build, but which in no age will ever be fully realized. Stonington is indeed a happy land, the land of my birth, a pleasant land that I shall always love, and the idea of your being there has carried my thoughts back into the past, and brought vividly to mind the events of my early days, that it seems but yesterday that I was a wild, romping, schoolgirl, the very personification of mischief. Ah! well do I remember my roguery everywhere, especially at school, and how my patient teachers bore with me during all those trying years, but looking all the while as if they deemed the task of teaching me a severe ordeal. I often think of the lessons of wisdom as well as the deep interest which some of them manifested for my welfare, and I feel an affectionate regard for these best of friends, one of whom, Judge Fish, I hope you have had the pleasure of seeing, while in Stonington.

How much I wish I might have been there with you to point out the many points of interest, which you would pass by unheeded. Take, if you please, the road from your boarding place (now Mr. Eugene Palmer's) to the head of Mystic. Observe first the view either side from the top of the hill, at the head of the Point road. Then as you descend the hill, see those fancifully shaped rocks and stones of various shapes and sizes, some oval, some oblong, others triangular and pyramidal, often enclosed by a thickly set hedge of whortle-berry bushes laden with that delicious fruit, or the fragrant bayberry or tallow bush (for you must know that tallow grows on bushes in that prolific region), again you may see the tall, prim-looking, sweet-scented, sweet fern, or maybe one of nature's most beautiful wild beauties, the little four leaved pink rose, so abundant in fairy lands.

At the base of the hill see that rude old bridge over that little stream of clear water which lags so lazily along among its glistening pebbles, then hiding itself away in the bushy lot beyond. Then there is the numerous stalked shaped barberry, clad in its own beautiful green, its long slender stems bending gracefully beneath, the weight of their bright, crimson clusters, and then in groups, hedges, or perhaps singly, see the feathery formed blackberry, s<sup>o</sup>

closely set with dark, curly, hard-surfaced leaves and profusion of thimble-shaped berries, so sweet, so delicious, while ever and anon, the unassuming dewberry, creeps over dilapidated fences, fills up gaps in stone walls, trails around illshapen sharp stones, which ought not to be so near the wayside, thus trying to conceal the seeming negligence of man as well as the danger to which the careless rider is ever exposed.

Then there used to be an old red house, where somebody lived, also a small brown house where a family lived whose children were so judiciously trained by a good mother to habits of industry, neatness, order and economy, that all the children married well, and were happily settled in life. Not far distant was a large, old-fashioned white house, shaded by some large old trees, and distinguished as the residence of a true-hearted widower, one who was said to have declined all overtures from the ladies to enter a second time into matrimony, a widowed daughter, a granddaughter and two bachelor sons, the latter kept a store nearby (near the Thomas Palmer house) where at all times might be found rum, raisins and ribbons, crockery, calico, codfish, silks, sarsenets, sugars and shawls with the usual *et ceteras*. On each side are corn patches, cow pastures interspersed with great rocks and stones, about which the wild morning glory has woven itself into beautiful net work, while here and there are various little arbors formed of cast-off brushwood and decayed bushes, overrun by the splendid ivy which by its brilliant green in summer and varying shades in autumn, ever adds so much beauty to the landscape. And yonder, in sullen dwarfishness, stand numerous shrub oaks peeping crabishly down upon the sterile earth as if to reproach their miserly mother for their uncouth deformity. Then hither and thither are countless heaps of loose stones, placed either to commemorate the wealth and industry of the owner, or as proper and convenient abodes for reptiles. A little farther on is the line of decaying old poplars, stretching their bare, stiff limbs heavenward with here and there little tufts of bright, fresh leaves, which remind one of pleasant, youthful feelings in the hearts of aged friends, and over the wall are divers young ones growing rankly at random, their little supple limbs dancing in the slight breeze, and looking saucily up at their aged sires seeming to say, "Old gray beards, don't you wish you could get over here and trip the fantastic toe as we do?" Then on the opposite side is a square, neat looking, little white house, fronted with a few handsome trees, some nicely trimmed shrubs and a carefully trained woodbine, and occupied by several maiden ladies, all very tall, very prim, very good and if still living must be very old.

Next is that celebrated Tavern, where all classes, ages and sexes used to stop on Sunday mornings to "fix" before entering church and these were novel scenes. This crazy old hostelry sets flat upon

the north side of the road, stretching its broad, shingled sides towards the four points of the compass as far as its stiff old timbers would permit, looking for all the world as if trying to grasp as much of terra firma as possible. Then the earth all around apparently striving to get uppermost (as dirt will sometimes) had climbed several inches up the decaying shingles, giving the house an appearance of sometime making a final exit into the cellar. At the front door lay a large, unwrought, flat stone of irregular shape, so deeply inverted into the earth as to bring its surface just even with it. This was the door stone, and from this we stepped into the house. Ten or twelve feet from the door and nearly in front, stood a horse block, composed of three huge stones with a rough post at each side; here, the ladies mounted, dismounted and hung their horses. Just in range of this, and about the same distance from the door was the old family well, with its long sweep and pole, its backload of stone, its old, leaky, rusty-hooped bucket, its ancient brown board curb, skewed into a rhomboid and a long watering trough on one side. From this fountain, the horses and the people were watered. The west end of the house was ornamented with a long horse shed furnished with sundry pegs, nails, rings and hooks for hitching and a deep manger, which the hungry animals, for want of something more palatable to eat, had knawed into points, squares, scallops and parallelograms. The little space stretching out between the house and the street was thickly dotted with rock heads, protruding just far enough to stub everybody's toes and to spoil everybody's shoes.

The opposite side of the street was bounded by an apology for a wall, several very infirm old poplars and another horse block. In the rear of the house stood the usual out buildings, a barn, crib, shed, pig-sty and hen house. These were all in the very highest state of dilapidation. Every shingle seemed vibrating upon a headless nail, the boards all loose and askew, the doors ajar, warped and without fastenings, and so exceedingly sensitive had these old inanimates become that even the commonest little breeze would throw them into a regular fit of hysteria: and there they would stand writhing, creaking and wheezing, groaning and moaning so piteously that one could not refrain from fancying them to be in the last agonies of decay.

On one side of the barnyard always stood (on that sweet day of rest) the old black mare, a perfect Canadian in form, with uncropped mane and tail, in which could be found every variety of shade from a dingy yellow, down to a rich black, and both profusely decorated with straws and burs: poor, patient old creature, probably her chief ornaments had never been properly dressed since she possessed them. Ah! you cannot imagine how pensively resigned she used to look, wondering the while, I presume, why she could

not be cared for, carded and combed and fixed up like other horses for Sunday. On the other side was the cross-looking yellow cow, with her ugly staring eyes, with one horn turned nearly straight up and the other about as straight downward, a strange object she was indeed. A certain wag once remarked "That old yellow cow was conveniently equipped because she could hook both heaven and earth out of her way with the same push." In the distance and about the area, grew numerous cragged diminutive trees and bushes, which in accordance with the Scriptural injunction, ought for their unfruitfulness to have been hewn down long before and cast into the fire. Around the fences, higgledy piggledy, lay carts and ladders, plows and wagons, poles and pails, minus parts and many a distorted limb, types of faithful service in their country's cause. About the sink drain and in the little savory pools issuing therefrom were various specimens of old boots and shoes, broken crockery, tin and glassware, horse-hair, broomcorn and chips.

East of the house was the garden containing rather a parsimonious complement of vegetables, but a perfect feast of rocks, burdocks, pigweeds, grasses and nettles, and whatever else in that line the patron might choose to call for. On the sunniest side of this neglected spot, as it were, directly out of the wall had sprung up a thick hedge of cinnamon rose bushes, which despite the thousand and one obstacles there presented, grew and flourished and blossomed most vigorously. At one end of this most beautiful rose hedge, quite a liberal bit of terra firma was devoted to "posies" which glittered and gleamed with many of the gayest and most beautiful hues ever seen in a country flower garden. Then at the least imaginable distance from this little nook and by way of making just the sweetest variety in the world, our very fanciful landlord had located his piggsty, occupied by three slab-sided, lop-eared, lantern-jawed, speckled pigs, possessing scarce more of avoidupois than was absolutely necessary to retain their bones within their bristly coverings. The chief delight of these sweet creatures seemed to be fighting and squealing, at the same time looking so hungry that we could never divest ourselves of the apprehension that too near an approach might subject us to a deplorable fate.

In passing from this scene of beauty, deformity and danger we always had a gratuitous peep into the buttery, before whose little, brown, latticed, uncurtained window, there ever and anon stood one great pan of milk, which seemed to be a kind of general bathing tub for all the bugs and flies in that neighborhood, and an affecting sight indeed it was to see these poor insects: some like Cassius and Caesar the creamy Tiber buffeting with lusty sinews: some with feeble effort and anxious eye, vainly striving to attain the shore: others in agonizing despair sinking to rise no more, while others fast in the stocks had yielded up the ghost, and there lay solemnly

and silently admonishing all other bugs and flies never to trespass upon their neighbor's milkpans, but the charitable hostess used to say "That a few bugs and flies only made milk and cream the sweeter." Now this accidental discovery in the flymongering department was but the morning twilight of the neatness which dazzled the eyes of those who chose to make a more minute survey of the culinary proceedings in that selfsame Road-side Tavern.

Here we are on the front side again and yonder across the way, unprotected from the gales of Heaven by tree, shrub or vine, stands the old Church upon that little eminence of perfect sterility; within, without and around, all was an exact personification of barrenness. The church then had no porch, but one great barny door opened directly into the one and only apartment. The pulpit of ancient date, the pews uncarpeted, unstooled, bookless and fanless were square and sufficiently large to accommodate some twelve or fifteen persons. No cushions were there, we sat softly upon the smooth side of pine boards. Two flights of stairs in the southeast and southwest corners served to transport the singers and other high-minded ones to the upper regions. The bannisters of these aerial passages were open, which was positively pleasing to the ladies especially when they chanced to be late and were obliged to ascend in face of the audience. Not a particle of paint or varnish had ever dimmed the woody luster of this venerable edifice, internally or externally; no, the neutral beauty of the original was there. In summer a July or August sun would pour its sultry rays so unsparingly through those great, unblinded windows, that very little extension of the imagination was required to fancy ourselves in New Granada, for a dazzling glare seemed to come in at every window, and our boundary on the four sides one entire blaze, but in winter, we were decidedly cool, and the few present in one sense *collected*, there was no fire or even conveniences for one, not a single ray of warmth, save the little emerging from the pale hues of a wintry sun, as they fitfully struggled through the bright frost work upon the window panes. The door of the church being secured only by a latch, permitted the public to enter whenever they chose. The ground all about wore nearly the same aspect in summer as in winter, the grass brown, dry and crisp: the few dwarf weeds and shrubs by the fence side looking as if they had been bitten by an early frost or had been recently visited by Pharaoh's locust legions: scarcely a green thing could be seen, and yet it was not unusual on a Sunday morning to find a flock of sheep, in single solemn file making various perambulations about these sacred premises, but why they were there, no mortal could tell, unless perhaps as a kind of Botany Bay punishment for some act of disloyalty to their rightful sovereign. An amusing story used to be told about a truant wind blowing open the church door, and some sheep going in, and holding several nightly conferences.

A few paces east of the church and in the same lot upon a ledge of rocks, there used to be and of course now is (the foundation being upon a rock) a schoolhouse, which in convenience and architecture was a genuine old settler, but it is, however, a memorable place to me for the first singing school I ever attended was in that house, and there too dawned the morning of my teaching career. A little way south stood Uncle Graves' Cottage, where some people called to "fix" Sunday mornings, before entering church instead of going to the Tavern.

And with a few family matters this letter closes to be continued in other letters, but they cannot now be found, much



CHURCH PARLORS.

to our regret, for the intention of the writer was to carry one to the village of Mystic, and doubtless much would have been learned of the old houses and their occupants, which now will ever remain a closed door. This letter is signed by Miss Grace Stanton, written in 1852 of the memories of her youth here, making this description nearly a hundred years old as she was born in 1800.

The present church parlors, a little east of the church, was formerly a gambrel roof, half house, probably built by one of



Rev. James Noyes' sons. It was occupied by many different families, and many of them were Noyes, all descendants of our first minister, the Rev. James. About seventy-five years ago Mr. John D. Noyes sold it to Mr. Nathan Noyes, who married the daughter of Edward Sparger of Newport. They had a large family of children and lived here and in several other houses near the church. Mr. Noyes was both witty and keen, and many humorous stories are accredited to him. Among them, that one day his minister, Rev. Ira Hart, while walking through the woods going to the Dean's Mills, lost his way, but happening to come upon Mr. Noyes, who was chopping his firewood, Mr. Hart enquired of him, "If he could tell him where he was?" to which Mr. Noyes facetiously replied, "Yes, sir, you are on the north side of a white oak tree," which answer, we can imagine, provoked much merriment. After a time Mr. Noyes and wife moved to Mount Pleasant. Here, also, lived Aunt Hannah Graves, quiet and alone, the last of her family, and after her death, it was purchased by Miss Emma A. Smith, who gave it to the 1st Congregational Society, and by gifts of money and articles from the many friends of the church and descendants of the old members, and by the sale of souvenir spoons, enough was raised to entirely remodel it inside and out, so it is now used for entertainments and social gatherings connected with the church.

Just south of this house, a small house was built in 1694 for Rev. James Noyes to warm himself, between meetings: this was afterwards made into a school house. East of this house, for a long time, stood a variety store where everything from good cloth to small wares was sold. This store faced the road and had its half door and large show windows with their small panes of glass. It was kept for a time by Mr. Nathan Wheeler, who lived for a while a few rods below, in the old wood-colored house now standing, with the date 1777 showing distinctly in the stone chimney, which is in plain sight from the road on the west side of the house, now owned and occupied by almost the last of the Pequot tribe.

East of where the old Tavern stood is a house set within a pleasant yard, and shaded by some fine old elms, which though added to and renovated several times was originally built about 1730, by Mr. Elias Babcock, a lawyer, who after a time moved to Pawcatuck and sold the house to the Hobarts. The survivor of this family was Aunt Fanny, who lived for years alone in this house, except for a large cat which usually sat contentedly purring in the sunshine which streamed over the bright striped carpet, which was on the floor of her keeping room, having



THE BAKER HOUSE.

been made by her own hands, and the fire on the hearth with Aunt Fanny sitting complacently before it, in her large figured gown, with a broad ruffled cap on her head, was a picture of cheerful contentment which once seen was not soon forgotten. She was a grand type of the New England woman of a century ago, always a faithful attendant at church, where in her pew, near the pulpit, she could be plainly seen by all, and the size and shape of her old style bonnet proved very impressive to the children, who were fond of her, and nearly every Sabbath afternoon, some of them visited her or remained over from

church services to attend the concert which was held every month, on the Sunday evening nearest the full moon. This place is now owned by Mr. Charles S. Noyes, and has been much improved by him.

Following this road to the east but a short distance, used to stand a house, built in 1750, in which Mr. Enoch Stanton lived who married Waity Dyer. He was a silversmith and had his shop here, but was killed at the massacre of Fort Griswold, and on April 8th, 1783, his widow sent the following order to Capt.



MR. CHARLES S. NOYES HOUSE.

William Latham, "Sir, please to send me by the bearer hereof, Mr. Zebulon Stanton, the sum of Fifty pounds of my deceased husband (Lieut. Enoch Stanton's) wages for his service in Fort Griswold and his receipt shall discharge you from the same." Signed Wait Stanton. Mrs. Stanton sold this house after a time, and it was taken down about 1800, and became the property of Elder Elihu Chesebrough, who rebuilt it east of the Borough of Stonington.

Mr. Amos Gallup also had his blacksmith shop just east of this house, when he began housekeeping at the Road, and a

little recess on the north side, in the highway, marks the spot, while further up the road, nearly opposite the church, has been found debris from another old blacksmith shop, where at some earlier time horses were shod.

But a short distance east of this Stanton ground, stands the house built about 1710 by Edward Denison and his son John, whose first wife, Anna, was drowned in the well, which can now be seen by the roadside, southeast of the house as you are driving along the highway. This house is still in good order



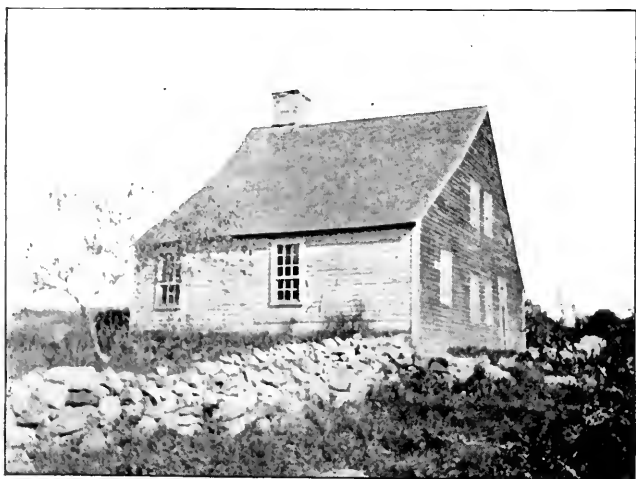
JOSEPH NOYES HOUSE.

and bids fair to stand a hundred years longer, although now nearly two hundred years old. It is a large double house, facing the south, the east side being broader than the west, which has only one window at the south, while on the right of the front door, the room is large and square with two windows at the south. In this room, is the old fashioned corner cupboard, which was enclosed by a circular bar, one half of which was movable and allowed the bar tender to pass back and forth as he served his customers. The entire upper story on the west side was once a dancing hall, with a swinging partition

in the middle which could be fastened up at will, and the hooks are still in the ceiling, although the partition has been made stationary. Mr. Denison sold this house and a small lot of land in 1760, to Col. Giles Russell of Wethersfield. He was a graduate of Yale College and a lawyer, being admitted to the bar in Hartford, Ct. Soon after he came to Stonington, he was appointed Captain of a company of fifty-five Conn. and R. I. men in the expedition against Havana under Admiral Pococke and Lord Albermarle, of whom only sixteen men reached home alive. He was married soon after his return, to Prudence Stanton, and when his law business increased, he built a lean-to on the east side of this house for an office, and afterwards increased it to its present size. In 1763 he was appointed Tavern Keeper there, and continued so till he entered the Army of the American Revolution as Lient. Col. in the 3rd Battalion, Wadsworth Brigade, which was raised in 1776 to reinforce Washington at New York. He was also in the French and Indian War, and died from effects of service in 1779, and is buried in the Road Cemetery, where the Society of the Children of the Revolution have placed a bronze marker at his grave. Col. Russell's house was afterwards bought by Mr. James Noyes, whose son, Uncle John, used it as the Town and Probate Office, of which he was the Clerk, for forty-two years. At his death, the office was removed to the village of Stonington. Later this place became the property of Mr. Edmund S. Noyes, and is now occupied by his widow and son Joseph Noyes.

Nearly opposite is a gate which leads down an old path to one of the oldest houses in town, owned by Dr. Jonathan Gray in 1720. He it was, whose services were required in the homes of our grandfathers, when blood letting and leeching were the order of the day, and the family doctor was the personal friend and confidant of the household. It is still tenable, and is owned by one of his descendants, Mr. Henry Clay Stanton. Quite near to this house was another called "the house on the Rocks" where Blind Jesse Dewey lived, who was the beneficiary

of all his friends and neighbors, especially during the winter season. At one time he was presented with a barrel of flour, by a benevolent gentleman, Mr. Charles Phelps, and it was placed on a long table in his small room, where removing the head of the barrel, as it lay on its side, about one third of the flour came pushing out in great white drifts, which nearly covered the table where Mother Dewey was mixing her biscuit ready for the Tin Baker which stood before the fire; having a caller, she told him what one of her neighbors had said to her.



DR. JONATHAN GRAY HOUSE.

that Mr. Phelps had given it only for the name, when Uncle Jesse spoke up, saying, "I don't care if he did, it tastes just as good."

A little northeast of Stoney Brook, where it crosses the road, stands the Thomas Palmer house, which was built in 1720, by Rev. Ebenezer Rossiter, who had been given some eight or ten acres of land by Mr. Samuel Chesebrough, upon which he erected this house which is now standing, well protected by trees before the door and a fine avenue of rock maples, leading up to the mansion which is a large two-story house with the

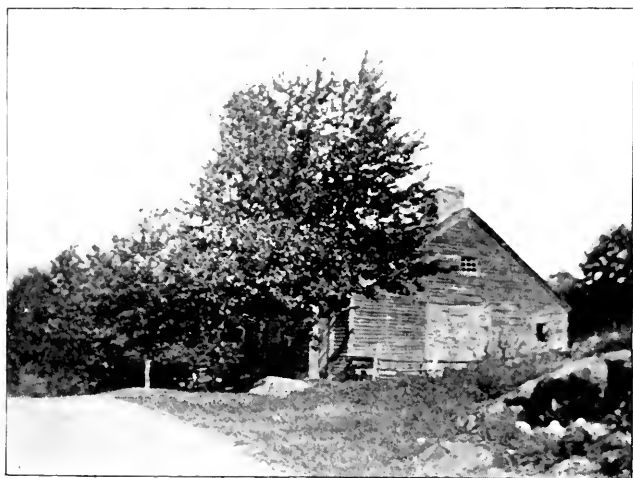
sloping roof at the rear; few of this style of houses are now left standing about here. It is well preserved, and as you stand upon the broad stone step before the front door, your eye rests upon the iron knocker, which has sent so many expectant thrills through the occupants of this house in the past one hundred and seventy years. The iron door handle is set in a spade shape of iron above and below, and lifting the latch will disclose to view a hall and fine old winding staircase, which carries you by several turns to the third story. The wainscot-



THOMAS PALMER HOUSE.

ing in the west room, the summer beams and deep cornice bear evidence of the grandeur of this old house in days gone by. Mr. Rossiter, not being able to pay for this house, sold it back to Mr. Chesebrough, who in turn sold it to Mr. Thomas Palmer, whose son afterwards owned it, and it is still in the Palmer name. After Mr. Rossiter left here, he bought land of Mr. John Dean, about a quarter of a mile west of the church, and built another house, which he occupied, and after a time he erected a small schoolhouse nearby, where he fitted students for college. He died here in 1762. Later on, in this same house,

occurred a double wedding, when Nancy and Lois, only daughters of the young widow of Ethan Denison, married Nathan Noyes and Joseph Griswold one beautiful Sunday morning, and began their wedded life, one in Stonington and the other in Coleraine, Mass. These four lived many happy years, and with their children and grandchildren celebrated their golden wedding, but not being able physically to join each other on that day, messages of affection and congratulation were exchanged by electricity. This house from which they were



CATO'S HOUSE.

married was taken down about 1850, and another stands on its site, now occupied by Mr. Jesse D. Noyes.

Rev. Ebenezer Rossiter's daughter, Hannah, married Mr. John Hilliard, who owned the land and also a house a short distance south of the church where Mr. Frank Noyes resided for a time, and where now his son, Mr. Frank Noyes, makes his summer home. Mr. and Mrs. Hilliard had no children, and after his wife's death he married Ann Potter, who survived him and married, second, Lieut. Daniel Collins, the keeper of the Tavern near here for a long time. This Mr. Hilliard gave the land for



the Road Cemetery, which has recently been beautified by the erection of a family mausoleum for Mr. Gilbert Collins, great grandson of this Lieut. Daniel Collins.

Another of Mr. Rossiter's daughters, Mary, married Thomas Palmer, and began housekeeping a short distance below her sister, Hannah, in a house built long before the Revolution by himself, where he carried his bride, who only lived a few short years. This wood-colored house with its old stone chimney, showing on the outside the entire length, as you come up the hill from the west, is still standing in a fair state of preservation and owned by the Palmer family. It is now known as Cato's house, having been occupied by one of Mr. Palmer's slaves, who was also a negro soldier of the Revolutionary war. He and his wife Flora occupied this house till their death. The story is told of Cato that when he was married, Rev. Mr. Hart was called in to perform the ceremony, and after its conclusion, and refreshments had been served, Cato said to the minister, "Mr. Hart, I want to see you round behind this door a minute?" Following him, Mr. Hart said, "What do you want, Cato?" "Why I want to know how much you are going to ax me for this job?" "Oh!" said Mr. Hart, "I guess about a dollar." "Cheap enough, Marsa Hart," Cato replied, "I'll give you all my custom."

On the other side of the road is the Mint house, fast going to ruin. Here was where Rose lived alone with her little daughter. She was a negro woman for whom the church cared, and here her friends for miles around met at stated times and had a quilting for her benefit. These were merry occasions, and an outdoor picnic supper was served under the trees, as the house was far too small to even admit the quilting frames, having only one small room above and below. It was supposed to have been built by Mr. Noyes Palmer some time in the latter part of 1700—as Mint, or Mintus, Palmer was one of his slaves.

Within a short distance south of here, were several old houses. The first at the right was where Robert Milley lived, who was

a good musician and played the violin for the country dances. During the summer season he was a vender of wild fruits and berries. At the left was the old house, which Benjamin Searle owned and sold to Katherine Angier (tailoress) in 1743, and she sold it later to Symonds Whipple, while below here a few rods, the old, low, gambrel roof Hancox house stood close to the road.

A short distance to the north, where the road curves abruptly from the west, stands the Edward Hallam house built by the great-great-grandson of the first John Hallam, in the



DUDLEY BROWN HOUSE.

early part of 1700 as a half, one story, low house, but it has been added to and improved, making it now seem comparatively modern. Here, later, Mr. James Norman, an Englishman, lived, and he was the first one to play the "bass-viol" in the Road Meeting-house. This place afterwards belonged to many different people, and is now owned by Mr. Dudley Brown.

Just a little west of the church stands the Woodbridge house, a low story-and-a-half edifice, with the front roof built gambrel and slanting in the rear, with little dormer windows which

have been built in recently. The house is snugly ensconced amid surrounding trees in an old style garden, where still abound the old-fashioned flowers so dear to the heart of every child of nature. As it stands upon a corner, in four directions can be seen the passers-by, and many a merry tale is told of the various families who have lived under this old roof-tree. This house was built by Mr. Joseph Page, early in 1700. He was born in Watertown, Mass., in 1679, and came to Stonington and married the daughter of Capt. Joseph Saxton, who lived



WOODBRIDGE HOUSE.

west of Anguilla Brook nearly opposite the new quarry, which was opened a few years ago. The site of this house is still found by an old double-faced wall on the south side of the road. Capt. Saxton kept an Ordinary or Tavern here, which was considered by travellers better than any other for miles along the road.

In 1776, Mr. William Woodbridge came to live at the Page house. He was son of Dr. Dudley Woodbridge, and was considered a great man of his day. He married Zerviah Williams, and having no children of his own he left by will in 1825 a

thousand dollars to the Road Church and society, if they would raise another thousand, which they did. His wife's will was made famous by being written by the noted Aaron Burr. After Mr. Woodbridge's death this place became the property of Mr. Thomas Noyes, and is now owned by Mr. James A. Lord.

Opposite the Woodbridge place, is a deep cavity, which marks the spot of an old, old house once occupied by Mr. Eleazer Wheeler and family, and just across and east of this, in the Society lot, a house formerly stood, where now can be seen a large clump of lilacs, some stones and a slight depression in the earth. Here Mr. Francis Noyes was born, when his parents lived in this house. It being situated so near the church, it proved very convenient when the spring house-cleaning time came, and the church received its share of attention: water was heated here, and all needful utensils were found to carry on this work. Not far from here, but a little east of Mr. Lord's house, was at one time a large building, which was used as a store house, but it has been taken down within the last century and carried to Stonington Borough.

Now journeying up the road we turn at the corner and pass under an arch of drooping elm trees, past the old place of Rev. Mr. Rossiter's, where now another house stands, and on until we come to the Dea. Jo. Denison house, standing upon a little eminence. It is a broad, double house, with the chimney in the middle, but no rooms in the rear, except in the three ells. This house was built in 1730, during the life of Mr. Denison's first wife, who was instrumental in decorating the large west keeping-room with the beautiful entablature which is found there now: also the panel work over the fire-place and the deep cupboards with their glass doors can be seen. Mrs. Denison was Mrs. Content (Hewitt) Russell, widow of the first ordained minister at North Stonington. This house is peculiar in many respects, having been added to and formerly used by two families. The dark passageways and six garrets, full of old time clothing, letters, and all things dear to the heart of

childhood, makes it an ideal playroom, and so it has been used by the little children who for years have been in this family. Two of the four outside doors open directly into the garden, where are found little beds of old-fashioned flowers, phlox, nasturtiums, pansies, poppies, tulips, climbing roses and trailing vines, once tended by loving hands. The old porch at the back of the house draped with trailing grape vines remains the same : the bench upon which to dry the milk pans : the gnarled and



THE MOSS HOMESTEAD.

knotted dry branch firmly imbedded in the ground, where the milk pails were hung to dry and air; the baskets and pails which in the autumn were heaped with fruit : the grindstone and little three-legged stool: the half slat door put in to keep the babies from falling out on the hard stone steps, all make the picture complete. On the north side in the upper story is the arched window with small panes of glass, almost an oriel window, set between two portions of the house, which

project upon either side. All these remain to the present day to testify of other lives and former happy days. Mr. Zebbe Chesebrough and family lived here when he was chorister at the Road Church. Afterwards Dea. Denison's grandson, Amos, lived here with his family, and his daughter, Caroline, married Mr. William C. Moss. This family were here for years, and still own it though many of them are now residents of Western States.

Just north, on a little hill, stands a large, double white house,



PELEG DENISON HOUSE.

with cherry trees before the door, which was built by Dea. Jo. Denison's son, Peleg, in 1775. He married Dr. Jonathan Gray's daughter, Mary. It was afterwards owned by Mr. Sylvester Wallworth, and later on by Mr. George W. Noyes, who rented it for years to Mr. Uriah Harvey, and it is now owned by that family.

A little further up the hill, apart from the road, stands the ancient Gallup house built about 1700 by Symonds Whipple's son, William, who married Mary Gallup. Mr. Symonds himself lived a little north of the David Stanton house. The Whip-

ples came from Ipswich, Mass., and Symonds' father was Cy-prian, who married Dorothy Symonds, daughter of Samuel, who at one time was Deputy Governor to the Colony. This two story half house is quaint in style with the north side of the roof sloping to the very windows of the first floor. The little leanto was attached, and until very recently it has preserved its original appearance in all respects. Amos Gallup built the blacksmith shop, which used to stand just below the hill at the west, and the story has been handed down to the present gen-



THE GALLUP HOUSE.

eration, of the great snow storm on Dec. 25th, 1811, when not being able to get a horse to the shop, because of the banks and huge drifts of snow, he was taken into the kitchen, and his shoes were fitted by the great fire on the hearth.

The Gallups were noted as good story tellers and very fond of a joke: the later generation who occupied this house are remembered yet: two brothers and two sisters lived here in harmony for nearly a century: one sat in darkness for many years, but with true spiritual vision she lived her life in the light of God. When her young friends came to see her which they

always delighted to do, she would rise carefully from her chair, where she always sat near her bureau, and reaching up her beautiful hand, would place it tenderly, first upon their shoulder, and then up to the crown of their head, exclaiming, "Why, how much you have grown!" Her father was great grandson



THE COPP PLACE.

of Capt. John Gallup, and her mother was Wealthian Dean, who lived at the Dean Mills. This family has gone, and only memories are left about this place, which has now passed out of the name and belongs to Mr. Leander Park.

At a little distance from this house, runs the Copp brook, the very name of which will suggest to many the dewy, spring



morning, when with fishing rod in hand, they have set forth intent upon the pleasure of trying for those golden-flecked beauties, which are known to be always found here. The intricate windings of the brook, in and out, bring you at length to the public road, where set back a little from the gaze of the traveller, stands the Copp Mansion, built by Jonathan Copp before 1720. This house, like a very few now left in town, is two stories in front and one in the rear, with the roof slanting to the windows of the lower story and the little leanto built at the back, which used to serve as wash and sink room, and was useful in many ways. The rooms show the summer beams and panellings, which in olden times was considered of importance in building a fine house. The large dooryard with its white fence, encloses at one side a massive pile of rocks, over which a large butternut tree spreads its broad branches.

Mr. Jonathan Copp's son, Jonathan, graduated at Yale College, and married Esther, widow of John Seabury, and is spoken of as the Grammar Schoolmaster. Samuel was deacon of the Road Church for fourteen years, and his son, Samuel, though never a deacon, was yet a conspicuous member of this same church. Uncle Sam, as he was familiarly called, was usually present every Sabbath day, and always stood during the long prayer, which was just before the sermon: dressed in his long light coat buttoned straight up and with a very high white collar and black stock, he was a striking figure, and was stealthily watched by all the children in the congregation, during this time. He was a quick-witted man and fond of poetry, writing acrostics and lines upon various occasions. He was married three times, and the following is his own composition, and very well expresses his views: "I married first for love and second for her purse, the third for a warming-pan, doctor and nurse," which was considered by his neighbors quite true. Uncle Sam had a brother, John Brown Copp, who was deaf and dumb: he learned the stone mason's trade, but having an artist's mind and eye, he used to make large pictures in pen and ink. Photo-

graphs and maps are still in possession of his relatives, showing his artistic nature. He also drew patterns for white bed spreads or counterpanes, as they were then called, for the young ladies of the neighborhood, who must own one of these among their marriage portion. They were made of cotton or linen homespun cloth, and embroidered in design with white cotton, called "Tufted work;" the date and name of the maker was also worked upon them. One or more of these can now usually be found among the treasured possessions of almost every old



THE HOME OF THE STANTON BROTHERS.

family in town. Many are the beautiful garments, dainty white satin slippers, gold beads, embroidered bags and old style bonnets and shawls, which have been handed down in this family as heirlooms for many generations and treasured carefully, till now they rest in the Smithsonian Institution at Washington. In this Copp homestead, social family life was fully enjoyed, for, gathered under this old roof-tree, wit, beauty and culture united to form nature's noble men and women.

A mile or so southwest of the Copp place, stands a gate which leads to one of the houses of the late Stanton brothers.

It is well preserved, though built long before the Revolution, and owned in 1790 by William Denison, great grandson of Capt. George: he afterwards sold it, and went with his family to Ohio, where his descendants have become men of note and business ability. His son, William, was a very wealthy farmer: he endowed the Denison University at Granville, Ohio, and gave \$30,000 for other educational purposes. He had fifteen hundred acres of fine farming land at Salem, Ohio. When Mr. Denison left Stonington, he sold this place to a Mr. Morey, who again sold it to Mr. Frank Stanton, who with his sons have made these places the center of business life, as each of the brothers had his special line of work. In this large family of five sons and four daughters, we can but know that a great part of the pleasure of the nearby society would center about them: many a sleighing party and dance was quickly gotten up, and a regular good time enjoyed at a neighbor's of an evening, while a good-sized party could be easily given with one or two families, the size of this, meeting together. Chief among the merry makers was Aunt Maria, whose very presence seemed to fill the house with good cheer, and if *she* was only there, everything was complete, for she was a host in herself and one to be relied upon at any time, either in joy or sorrow, and many were the homes gladdened by her voice at such times, and sweet is the remembrance of her whole life.

### CHAPTER THIRD.

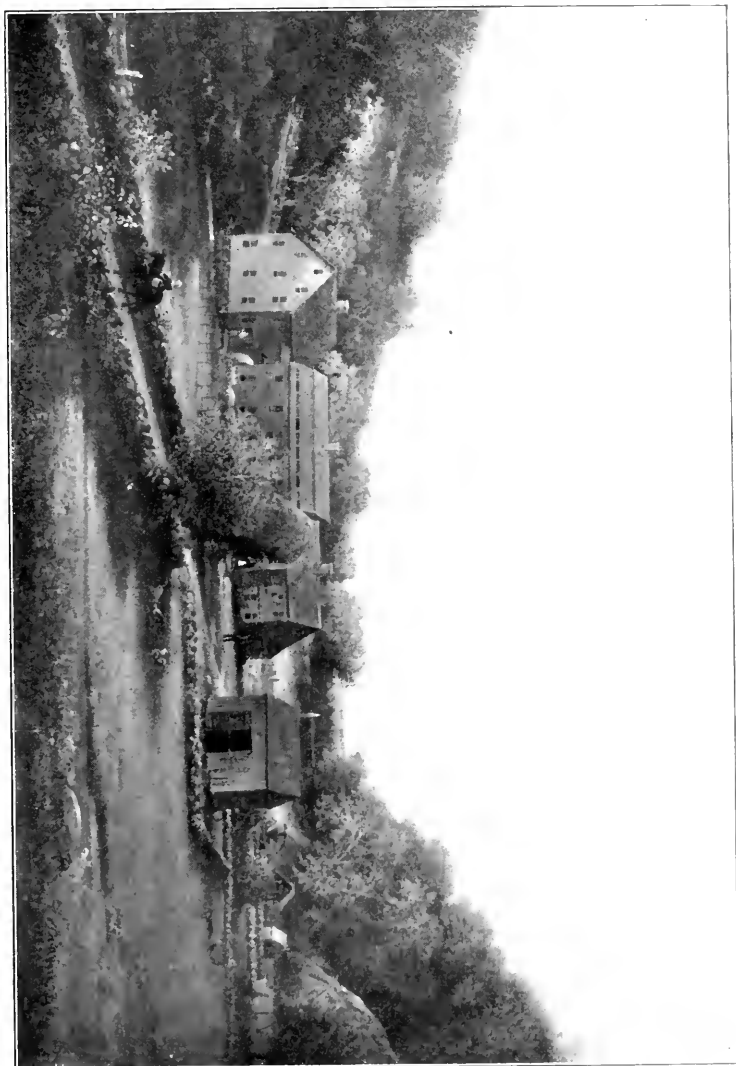
I see it all like a chart unrolled,  
For my thoughts are full of the past and old.  
I hear the tales of my boyhood told,  
And the shadows and shapes of early days  
Flit dimly by in the veiling haze.

— *Whittier*.

The path from the Stanton house to the Dean's pond is a most romantic, winding road. This has been an historic place in the town's history. The old house at Dean Mills was built by James Dean Jr., in 1700, and it was burned down in 1848. Mr. James Dean Sr., lived at Quiambaug, just east of the Quarry ledges. Very near this second Dean house was an immense rock, which still stands a silent and immovable reminder of bygone days. James Dean was a blacksmith and had also learned the trade of fulling and dressing woolen cloth. He built a dam and fulling mill on Mistuxet brook and he and his son, John Dean, built another which was enlarged in 1807 into a factory building, with grist mill and new machinery for cloth dressing, wool carding and for the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods, by Mr. John Dean and son, James. Here was where many young men of the first families were employed, and every Sabbath morning they could be seen on their way, walking to meeting at the Road.

The Dean pond, woods and the old Lovers' Lane, are now again made prominent features in our town. The pond is the head of the Mystic Valley Water Co., from whence the villages are supplied with water. The woods furnish a most picturesque picnic ground, which has been provided with tables, chairs, seats, and everything for a summer day's delightful outing.

DEAN MILLS.



The Lovers' Lane is a most charming drive, which has been again opened to the public during this last year, through the agency of Mr. Burrows Spaulding. This road begins at the bridge, and passes the spring where a cool, refreshing draught can be had from its clear depths. It received its name from the fact that during the time when these young men were employed at the factory there, one of them, a young Englishman, was much pleased with one of the young ladies of the Dean family and they often wandered through this lovely bridle path, where amid nature's environments, they could converse of things dear to the heart of youth, but the family of this young girl were not pleased with his attentions, and so this place was more stealthily frequented by these lovers, whose future was fated to hold only a sad memory of those never to be forgotten days of love and joy. They were often met at the edge of the evening on this romantic path, so the name of "Lovers' Lane" has ever clung to the spot.

From many reminiscences culled from letters written to my father by Mr. James D. Fish, I quote: "So many fond associations cluster about the Old Place, as we were wont to call it, that I am at a loss to assign to each its order and time. The main body of the old Dean Mills house was built in 1700, the north-western part was doubtless built later, and the floor was at least a foot and a half up, so as to have it higher above the ground, to keep it dry, making it two steps above the kitchen, and two steps down on the south side to enter the parlor. The front porch was two stories high, the upper part was a sleeping room, and occupied by many a boy during his visit or labor at the mill. Mr. Charles Grinnell was put there to sleep, when he went there to live Oct. 27th, 1827, and continued to occupy it during his stay. Clustering around this house, were many other buildings and objects of interest in those early days: the barn, well, horse-block, old wash rock (which can yet be seen), the crib, also the shop, factory, cider mill and bleach house. On the west side of the house was the hitching post, for horses that

came with grists for the mill. That post had its foundation, through an old mill-stone, which had been worn too much for its former use, but which now prevented the horses from pawing the ground and pulling down the post.

The Pine Tree standing near the large rock has an interesting history. It was brought from the state of Maine in 1828, in the sloop *Montgomery*, Uncle Jerry Holmes, Captain. He had just arrived from his annual voyage in the spring, to that state. The sloop was lying at Judge Asa Fish's wharf: Uncle Jesse Dean was at Mystic with the old grey mare and green wagon. It was very nearly night when Uncle Jerry said to his son, Isaac, who was then only a boy, "Isaac, go on board the sloop and get a little pine tree (which he described to him) and put it in the back part of Mr. Dean's wagon," which order was promptly carried out. In a few moments Uncle Jesse was off for the old homestead, and I went with him, as I often did to make a visit. It was evening when we got there, and the following morning, after a conference between Grandfather and Uncle Jesse, they decided where it should be placed, in that little peach orchard as it was generally called. Along the south wall of that lot, dividing it from the barn yard, were some good-sized peach trees, which bore a large supply of excellent fruit, also many pear trees, and near the center of that lot was the largest lilac bush I ever saw, a protection for hens and turkeys that gathered there for a safe and secluded roost. Close to the wall, on the south side of the lane that led to the well was a row of pear trees, under which stood Aunt Fanny's cheese-press, which was always kept in use during the productive season. In this press, sage and other good cheese was made and pressed and then put upon strong shelves in the large, dark buttery, where it was cured, prepared and sent to market in New York and Philadelphia. This was before the western cheese was sent to market, which superseded the Connecticut product.

I remember walking with my grandfather James Dean on many occasions, and particularly once in the garden, where

grew the rare-ripe peaches and his knocking off for me some of the choicest fruit with his stout oaken cane. Aunt Fanny and Uncle Jesse were always kind to me: the former was renowned as being an excellent housekeeper, skilful with her needle in embroidery and she wrought many samplers in fine silk work, "she also laid her hands to the spindle and her hands held the distaff." Her cooking was highly appreciated by all: I well remember the stores of pies and cookies laid up in the Captain John Black sea-chest which was never locked, but free to all, children and adults, to help themselves, ad libitum. Capt. Black, the first husband of Martha Haley (my great-grandmother), probably died in the West Indies, but his grand old chest now occupies an honored place in memory. Uncle Jesse often took me with him on his walks and rambles: in the spring he made for me, whistles from the young and succulent shoots of the chestnut tree, and on the crisp October mornings he climbed their rugged branches and shook down for me, the bursting burs. There was almost everything to amuse and interest a boy at the Dean Place, the wide flowing pond, affording sport for youthful fishermen in the summer, and its frozen, glassy surface in the winter, yielded great enjoyment for the sliders and skaters. The noisy factory, where was making satinets and fencing rolls, in which I sometimes took a part, the many hands rollicking and full of life, the busy grist-mill, Elijah Brown the miller, the troop of horses and their riders, awaiting their grists, the number of persons continually coming to and going from the house, all took up one's attention and left no time for homesickness.

Then there came to the factory, periodically, to remain two or three weeks, a corpulent, round and jolly little man, Uncle Johnny Braman from Groton, to make the new shoes and to repair the old ones, belonging to the family and apprentices. He was indeed an amusing and entertaining personality: his shoemaker's bench was between two desks, one of which Grandfather Dean was accustomed to occupy, and where Uncle Jesse



wrote at the other. They were attentive listeners to Uncle Johnny's stories which were repeated and many times retold, which of course interfered much with his work, but his listeners were no doubt well satisfied. Mr. Mix also put in his appearance about as often, as tailor, to make and repair garments for all hands.

Much of my time when a boy was spent at this home, when Dudley Lary, Robert M. Haven, Alonzo Leeds, the Scholfields, Elias Gallup and Peter Johnson as boys were living there.

Uncle Jesse Dean was for many years Town Clerk of Stonington and kept his official documents and books in the southwest room or parlor, and many persons came thither for transacting public business. Uncle Jesse was greatly interested in the success of Democratic principles and was frequently in conference with prominent men and leaders of that party, who came there to talk over and caucus Town, District and County affairs. My grandfather and Aunt Fanny were also decided in the Democratic faith, and their ideal of human and political perfection, materialized in the old hero of New Orleans, General Andrew Jackson. Aunt Fanny's benevolences were not confined, however, to the members of her own church and party, for not one of all who came to her door asking for bread, ever went away refused. "She stretched out her hand to the poor, she reached forth her hands to the needy." As the Deans were good singers, we enjoyed many a long, winter's evening, as we sat around the roaring fire-place, hearing the songs and grand old tunes of those days. Mr. Zebbe Chesebrough lived near and he and his daughter would come in, for she and Uncle John were very good friends and sang much together, he taking the air and she the bass, probably having what we would now call a contralto voice. They sang, and danced the Shakesperian song of "Greensleeves" or "Christmas comes but once a year": this is a very old tune, dating back to 1580, but the original words are lost and the author forgotten. I have the old mahogany pitch pipe very nicely made, and with J. D. handsomely inlaid,

used about 1792, by Uncle Jabez and Uncle Jesse who taught school in Virginia at that time, and Uncle Jabez died at the house of Mr. Wm. Davis, near Saffony church in Dinwiddie Co., Sept. 26th, 1795.

I copy from my father's diary (Hon. Asa Fish), Sunday April 5th, 1812, an account of his visit at Mr. Dean's: "About ten o'clock, crossed the river, stopped at Mr. Grant's, enquired the most direct way to Mr. Dean's, stopped again at Mr. Nat Wheeler's, and again enquired: called at Mr. Dean's, found Mr. Jesse at home, being ill of the cholic; his youngest daughter, being about five years old, was in bed and surrounded by the family as she had been unfortunately kicked a few days before by Mr. Chesebrough's horse, but is apparently recovering. Being rather late for meeting, I abandoned my intention of hearing Rev. Mr. Hart today, and concluded to stay at Mr. Dean's till afternoon, at three o'clock, and then go to hear the singers perform, according to appointment. Went at the time to the meeting-house, where was the singing school, accompanied by Elisha Williams, Denison Williams, Dean Gallup and Mr. Jesse Dean. On our way back, we called at Mr. Ethan Denison's, and saw Esquire Miner for the first time, and viewed Mr. Dean's building for the purpose of carding, picking, roping and spinning woolen. In the evening, sang with the bass viol, Dean Gallup playing. Monday morning, April 6th, dark and wet, stayed at Mr. Dean's till noon, just before which time, Mr. Zebbe Chesebrough called in, and after we sang a few tunes, I came home in a devious and trackless path, and now the weather clears up."

At this old place in those days was an abundance of all kinds of berries: wild grapes and nuts grew in the meadows, pastures and woods. Peaches, pears and apples of the best varieties loaded the trees in their season: well do I remember where stood the trees of Spicings, Denison reddings, Greenings and Sugar pears, with which, Bartlett pears as compared with them are stale and flat. Then what a festival was Thanksgiving; on

the long table in the east room was spread the ample feast, consisting of roasted turkeys, boiled hams, chicken pies, fresh beef and pork roasted, jellies and preserves of many kinds and pickles of every description, and the dessert of pumpkin, mince, and apple pies followed in due season. There was an old custom, then prevailing in New England, of doing all the cooking possible on Saturday, and the great oven was heated hot, and there the capacious pot of pork and beans, the great loaf of rye and Indian, and many other good things were stowed away in its immense cavity, the iron door was shut and the slow but thorough baking uninterruptedly proceeded, till all was evenly done. All work being over, at about sundown, we sat down for a quiet and restful Saturday evening. That family and almost all the factory workmen attended the Road Church on the Sabbath, and listened to the teaching of the Rev. Ira Hart, the gifted and beloved pastor, who was also a most welcome visitor at the Dean house." Now this property is divided and the Mystic Valley Water Co. owns the pond, and Mr. Eugene Palmer owns where the present picnic grounds and spring are situated: west of the bridge belongs to the heirs of the Stanton brothers and east of the road to descendants of Mr. James Dean.

The road from the Dean Pond to the Mystic highway is winding, up hill and down, till we come to Uncle Alec Palmer's old wood-colored, story and a half house standing under its canopy of shade trees. It was built in 1740 by Elisha Gallup, and in 1760 was occupied by Mr. Phineas Stanton, the defendant in the famous Leather Breeches lawsuit, the story of which is, that Dr. Joshua Babcock's son, Adam, carried on a shipping trade with the West Indies and other foreign ports. Being about to send a brig to these islands, and thence to the Bay of Honduras, and being in want of sailors, he wrote to Phineas Stanton, Jr., of whom he had heard, and engaged him as mate for the voyage. The vessel arrived at St. Croix, where Mr. Stanton wished to land, and so he asked Mr. Babcock for a portion of his wages, but Mr. Babcock, not having the money,

became very angry, and a quarrel began which lasted during their lives and cost them thousands of dollars. On landing at New Haven, Stanton had difficulty in settling with Babcock, and claimed to have been cheated out of £201; still he supposed it was finished for good and all. But he had no sooner reached his home in Stonington, than Capt. Simon Rhodes, who was then sheriff, arrested him for embezzling a pair of leather



ALEC PALMER HOUSE.

breeches, a glass mustard pot, a bottle of gunpowder and a quantity of old iron: still he said he would settle it, if Stanton would pay the small sum of twenty shillings, but to do this would acknowledge himself a thief, and rather than be so disgraced, young Stanton's father joined his son in the fight.

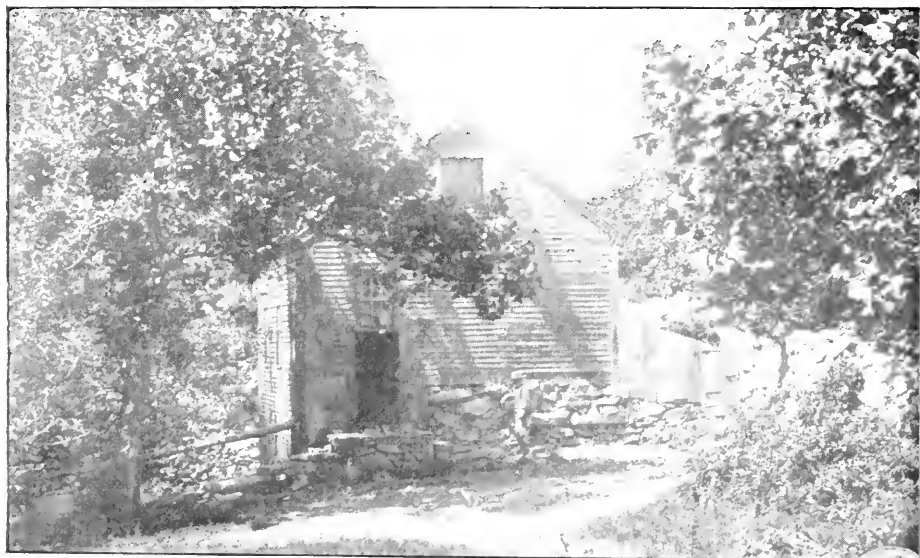
After the first trial, the verdict declared Stanton not guilty, and Stanton sued Babcock for defamation of character, and so the trial went on, first deciding in favor and then against, for four years. In the course of the trials it came out that Stanton

had bought some pieces of firewood of Babcock, and the old iron was the nails which remained in the ashes. In regard to the old mustard pot, it was proved to have been taken from Babcock's house to *his* brig, for *his* men, on *his* table, and was left there when Stanton left the brig, so that charge was withdrawn, and now the bill was reduced to the one pair of leather breeches, worth in the first place about sixteen shillings, but being very dirty and needing washing (which cost three shillings) it reduced their value to thirteen shillings. A special session of the Superior Court was held for this trial, the first result of which was in Stanton's favor, the second in Babcock's, and the final one in Stanton's. Every effort was made on both sides to get able witnesses from New York, Philadelphia, New Jersey, St. Croix, Norwich and New London. Leather breeches were brought and inspected, and even the minute stitches were compared and everything that could be thought of in connection with leather breeches was discussed. The most eminent counsel was procured, among them being Ingersoll of New Haven, James Hillhouse of New Haven, Woodbridge of Norwich, and Samuel Huntington, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and so at last the trial ended which had been nine years before the courts.

Mr. Phineas Stanton Sr. married Zerviah Eldredge and second, Esther Gallup, and their son, Eldredge, was killed at Black Rock, New York, Dec. 31st, 1813, in the last war with England. This Mr. Phineas Stanton also had two brothers, Enoch and Daniel, who were killed at Fort Griswold, and the family afterward moved to New York State.

Just below here, where now is the Pumping Station, was for years a grist mill, built by Randall and Noyes Brown, until sold to Uncle Alec Palmer, who ran it for many years, and here all the people came from about the town, bringing the corn to be ground, and enjoying the quiet yet humorous man, who is remembered by the present generation, as is also his wife, Aunt Delia, who was strong and active in all home and church work.

In this old Gallup house, which was a part of his father's estate, they lived the greater part of their lives, with the exception of a few years at Mystic, where his eldest son, Edwin, was born: here Uncle Alec worked as shoemaker, and lived in the house with his brother, Frank Palmer, and had his shop underneath on the south side. After a time they removed to the old Gallup house, where they remained till the close of life, honored and loved by all.



GRIST MILL.

Mr. Gilbert Fanning built the old house just below the Pumping Station about 1750 which has been recently remodelled for the use of the caretaker at the Water Works. His oldest son, Capt. Nathaniel, was a midshipman, commanding the main top of the ship, called Good Man Richard, when only about twenty years of age, under Capt. John Paul Jones in her famous fight with the English ship, Serapis, a King's ship of fifty guns, off Flamborough Head, and he distinguished

himself for bravery so much that Capt. Jones recommended him to Congress, and he was promoted to Lieutenantcy in the United States Navy, and had command of the U. S. Naval Station at Charleston, South Carolina, where he died, Sept. 30th, 1805, aged fifty years. Mr. Gilbert Fanning sold his house here to Mr. Samuel Gallup, who married Jemina Enos, a seventh day Baptist of Rhode Island. He put up a dam and saw mill about 1765 a few rods above where the old grist mill stood. His son, Joshua Gallup, married Anne Hinckley, and

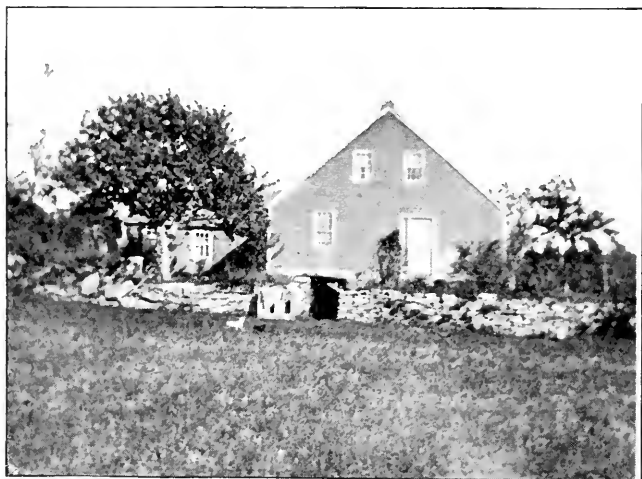


THE FANNING HOUSE.

lived at Berne, N. Y. state, commonly called by our grandfathers, "Up Country" or "Hill o' Barrack country." They were both very large people, weighing over four hundred pounds: they occasionally drove to Stonington, to visit their relatives, each occupying an entire seat in their double, open wagon, which was drawn by a pair of stout horses.

On the western slope of Palmer's hill is a house now standing, reached from the main road by driving through several gates and winding about among the rocks and ledges and passing be-

neath large oak and elm trees. It is a story and a half house, with the front door in the middle of the end, and at the left an immense flat stone covers the ground entrance to the cellar. Upon crossing this you come to the ell door, and passing through this sunlit room, come out upon a covered and protected stone porch, with a well at the further end beneath the little square window, which lets in the light and air. In 1770 this house was occupied by Robert Denison, whose daughter, Deborah,



THE ROBERT DENISON HOUSE.

was called the Quiambaug Beauty. She, of course, had many admirers, and the story is truly told of a gentleman, who riding on horseback, one Sunday evening in the latter half of 1770, alighted at her father's door, and after greeting her, enquired (as was the custom in those days), "If he might have the pleasure of her company that evening," but upon her replying that she was otherwise engaged, he responded, "Very well, Madam. I bid you good evening, I have a good horse and an extensive acquaintance," and rapidly cantered away, albeit his heart may have remained behind. Miss Denison afterward



married Dea. Charles Lewis, and went west, as New York state was called in those times, where her descendants are still living. This house is now owned by Mr. Noyes Palmer, and occupied by Mr. Horace Bromley and family.

Through the pleasant valley of Quiambang, we see many houses old and new. Turning at the schoolhouse we cross a bridge, and climb a hill, seeing on our left a snug and sunny house, built on the site of the home of Esther Denison, who



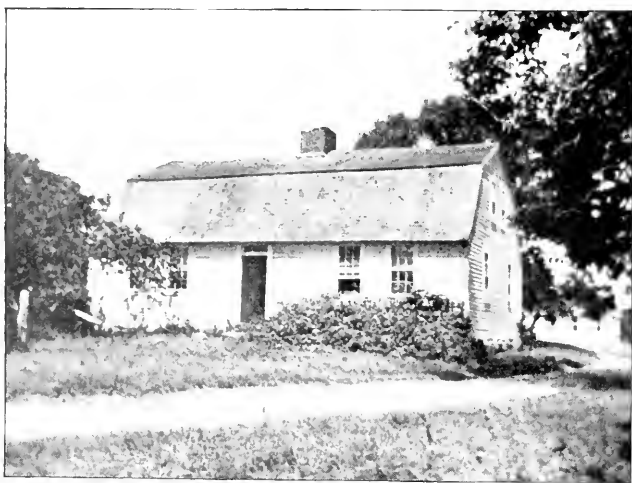
DERIAS DENISON HOUSE.

married Jonathan Wheeler in 1732. This house is now owned by Mr. Henry Baldwin.

Nearly opposite in the lots is the old brown story and a half house occupied about the middle of 1700 by George Woodcock, an Englishman, who lived here alone for years.

The records say, "He was a Sean-maker, and in 1749 he bought of Edward and Bridget Short for £235, in current money of New England, of the old tenor, two acres of land with dwelling house thereon standing: this being all the land sd. Short bought of Thomas Miner, Samuel Mason

and William Denison of Stonington." The heavily laden fruit trees grow close to the front door, through which have passed so many in the years that have gone. The rooms with deep summer beams are so low that a person entering will find his head coming in contact with them, if he be not careful. The floor bears the proof of the old man's solitary housekeeping, as the burnt and blackened marks of the kettles removed from the hot fire have left their impress for centuries. Mr. Woodeock was buried only a few feet from the house, and



AMBROSE MINER HOUSE.

in his will, which is a most amusing and singular one, he makes bequests to various friends and neighbors, of "his swarm of bees," and the rowen on his meadows to be given to a man to whom he owed a debt, in which case if he accepted, it should cancel the bill. He also directed that a certain minister from Groton should come and preach at his funeral, in return for which service, he was to be given a good meal and have his horse fed. He gave his house and place to Darius Denison, who married Mary Billings in 1771, and lived here, and his

son, Darius, after him, who married Mr. John Hyde's daughter, Nancy, and they built the old house anew in a great measure.

As we proceed on our way southward we come to a low, wood-colored, gambrel roof house, quite near the roadside and looking off down the Cove, this has been for many years a home occupied by the Miner family. The west half was built in 1750, by Thomas Palmer (who was a carpenter) for David Miner, the great-grandfather of the present owner, Mr. Ambrose Miner. The east half was built on by his son, Jesse Miner, who married Sally Hilliard in 1803; so it has passed from father to son, for the last one hundred and fifty years. Within, one may find many curious and interesting documents, and Mr. Miner will tell you much that is entertaining and historic. About opposite, just over the wall on the east side, was in 1702 the Town Clerk's office of Elnathan Miner, where the records kept by himself in those days, are now a pleasure to read, because of the fine chirography displayed therein.

A little way beyond, as we make the bend in the road, we see a low, brown, gambrelled roof house set amid its bower of shrubbery, nearly shrouded with climbing roses and trailing vines. On the north side is the leanto, enclosed by lattice work, while nearby is the well with the old oaken bucket hanging from the sweep, and the water which it brings up to the thirsty one leaning over the side of the curb, is cold, clear and refreshing. The large yard encircles the whole house, and in summer time the old-fashioned flowers grow in sweet profusion: in the grassy spaces surrounding them, grow tall dandelions and daisies, while here and there, knotty and knarled old apple trees throw their shadows over all. The house stands a little off from the bustling highway, not facing the road, but turned almost at right angles from it as if not caring to hear the rush and rattle of this twentieth century life, so absorbed it seems in its own memories. This is the old house of William Miner which was built in 1770, when he married Abigail Haley, and went to housekeeping there; it was then only a half one story house but, after a time, the large family of twelve

children necessitated a larger house and then the east half was added. Their third daughter, Abigail, married Joseph McCabe, and their daughter married, and has occupied this house for years as her home and it is now owned by her children, Joseph Cavanaugh and sister.

Further down at the end of the road and facing the blue waters of Quiambang Cove, where once dwelt the first Thomas Miner and wife Grace, now stands a more modern house, the



CAVANAUGH HOUSE.

third one built near the same spot, and occupied by those of the same name and also direct descendants in the 9th generation. This house will bring to mind pleasant memories to all those, who in the past, were participants of those Sunday school picnics, when Dea. Palmer, Aunt Maria, Uncle Nathan and Aunt Nancy, Uncle Alee and Aunt Delia, the Judge and wife, Esquire Moss and wife, Uncle Tom and the Major were among the chief actors upon these occasions. Ah! well do we remember the host at these times, who with his cheerful smile and genial face, walking with his hands clasped behind him,

was always delighted to see his friends, and his energetic wife whose helping hand was needed everywhere at once. Do you not see those busy ones making ready the fish and lobster in the kitchen, while boards became tables under the drooping boughs in the shady yard before the house, where a little later all would gather and feast upon the host of good things which had been prepared, and under which these tables would seem to groan. Then afterwards would come the sail upon the water (which came nearly up to the yard about the house), making light the hearts of all the children, who especially delighted in this part of the day's enjoyment.

## CHAPTER FOURTH.

“In that mansion used to be  
Free hearted hospitality;  
The great fires up the chimney roared,  
The stranger feasted at the board;  
Through days of sorrow and of mirth,  
Through days of death and days of birth,  
Through every swift vicissitude  
Of changeful time, unchanged it stood.”

The old Denison house which has become the “Mecca” of so many pilgrimages, is still standing, brown and weather-worn by time. It is situated upon the slope of a hill and two immense elms are in front. It is a large two-story mansion house. The front door is in the center with its old iron knocker. Upon either side are large sunshiny rooms, with a feeling of warm welcome in the very atmosphere. The summer beams, cornice and panelings are in evidence. It was built about 1717, by George Denison, grandson of Capt. George, and has been well cared for by his descendants. A new ell has been added within a few years. It was originally covered with the long, three feet shingles, which have all been removed with the exception of those on the west side, which are still quite well preserved. All about the house are large, flat rocks, which bear peculiar indentations. Stories of their origin have been told to the children of succeeding generations, “That they were footprints;” certainly very marked are these traces, worn or made by some heavy pressure. The George Denison who lived here, married Jane Smith, still known as Grandmother Jane to a few of Stonington’s oldest people. She lived to be ninety-eight years old and left a large number of descendants, and her picture adorns our church parlors.

Many kindly and benignant persons have passed the threshold of this Denison house, but none more so than Uncle Oliver, whose very presence with his flowing white hair as he sat in church, with hands resting upon the head of his long cane, or as we saw him in the high-backed armchair in the warmest



THE GEORGE DENISON HOMESTEAD.

corner of his pleasant sitting-room, seemed a benediction. This house is now occupied by his daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Ford.

About a quarter of a mile northwest of this house in Pequotsepos Valley, can now be seen, standing solitary and alone, the old stone chimney of the Gallup house, inhabited in 1682

by Benadam and John, son and grandson of Capt. John Gallup, of the famous swamp fight. Later, Silas Wheeler, who married Polly Thompson lived here, and his brother Nat, who married Prudence Breed; afterwards the latter moved with his wife and two sons to Vermont.

A little to the northeast, stands the new house occupied by the family of Mr. Randall Brown, who built it in the place of the old mansion which stood there more than a hundred years ago, for on March 29th, 1786, Mr. Robert Williams sold a cer-

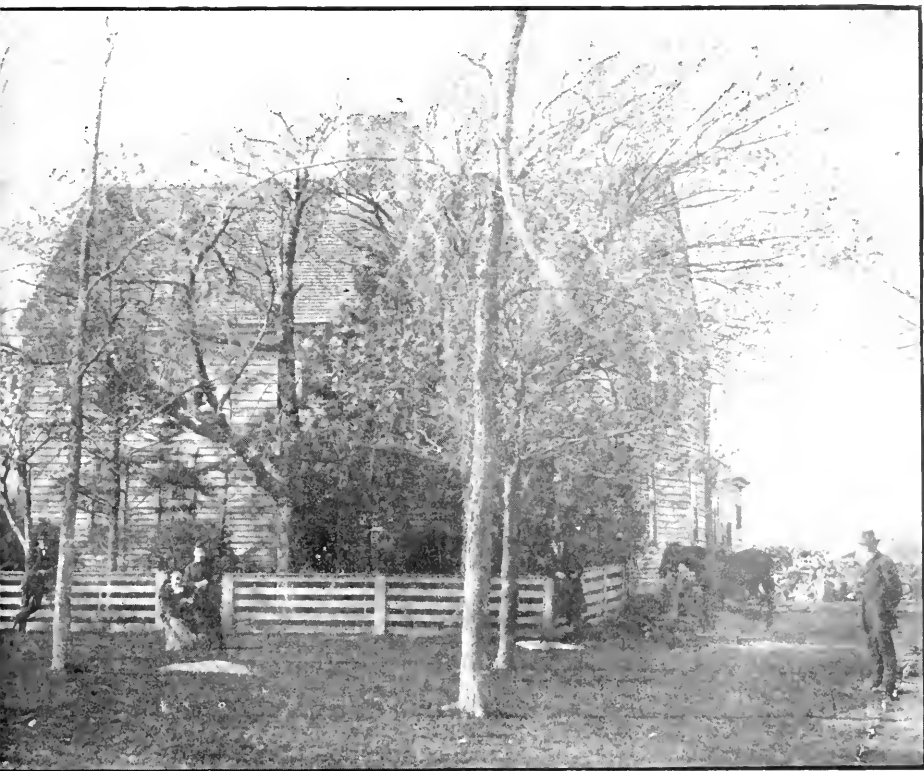


CHIMNEY, BENADAM GALLUP'S HOUSE.

tain tract of land of 107 acres, for £750 to Mr. Joshua Brown. The boundary of the deed begins "At a mear stone marked J. W.," presumably for land of the grandfather, John Williams, as this ground about here was Williams territory for many years previous to this: Mr. Thomas Williams, brother of Robert and John, who was killed at the massacre at Groton Heights, lived near here also, perhaps in the very house where now an old cellar and well are plainly visible a little to the southwest of the present dwelling house. Mr. Robert Williams was a very handsome man, educated at Dartmouth



College, and travelled about the country a great deal. He was also unusually strong, for the story is told of him that he wished to try his strength with the negro giant, Venture, but when Venture held out his hand and requested him to step



THE JOSHUA BROWN HOUSE.

upon it and easily lifted him into the air, Mr. Williams was satisfied that his strength was more than equalled.

The old house which was on this farm, was probably built about the middle of 1700, and was originally gambrel-roofed, then raised to two stories in front with the long, slanting roof in the rear, while still later it was entirely raised and became

the large, commodious dwelling which many yet remember. In the early days only the east side was completed, while the west was left unfinished for a long time and the cattle kept within it during cold weather, and some of the rooms in the second story were also left in the same condition. Here for four generations have lived the Brown family, direct descendants of Joshua and Joanna (Rogers) Brown, who came here to live from North Stonington: their son, Randall, who married Sally Palmer, sister of Dea. Noyes, about 1805, lived here, and

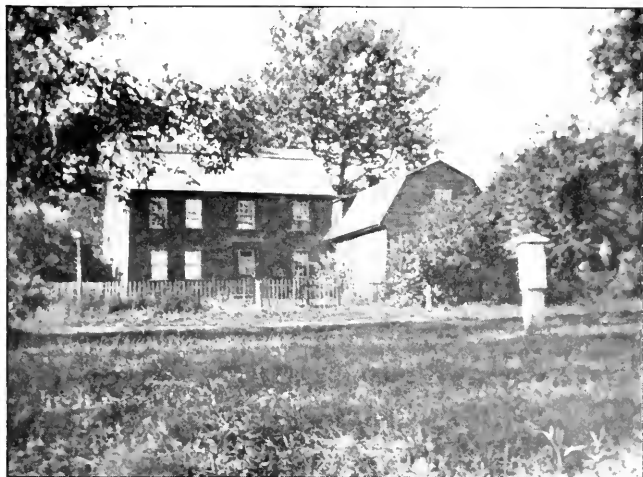


WHITE HALL.

later their oldest son, Randall, who married Mary Ann Holmes, began housekeeping here, and a few years later was joined by his brother Noyes, who married Martha Noyes, and they began housekeeping in the new ell which had been more recently added. The name Randall, which has been so faithfully carried down from one generation to the next in this family, came from Mr. Joshua Brown's mother, who was Elizabeth Randall, born July 4th, 1696.

A little further west is the White Hall Mansion, built by Dr. Dudley Woodbridge about 1740, who occupied it till his

death. Some twenty years before, another house stood there, where dwelt Lieut. William Gallup, whose daughter Temperance, married, in 1726, Rev. William Worthington, the first minister at North Stonington, and to whose wedding came the Indians from Indiantown, some eight miles above, with squaws and papooses, proudly displaying their feathers, paint and beads. They had been invited by the bride's uncle in a spirit of mischief, but when they arrived, marching in single file (as was their custom), they were escorted around to the kitchen, where



MRS. LUCY STANTON WHEELER'S RESIDENCE.

plenty of hard cider and Yorky cakes were served to them, and then they were politely invited by the bride's father to call again some other day, for he did not intend that his daughter's wedding should be made conspicuous by an unusual or unseemly display. This farm has been owned and inhabited by many different families since the time when Mr. Woodbridge gave it to his nephew, Mr. William Rodman. At one time Mr. Jared Wilcox, who married Bridget Stanton in 1788, owned and occupied it till they sold and removed to New York state. It is now owned by Mr. Samuel Bentley.

A mile or so above, in the picturesque village of old Mystic, much frequented by artists, stands an old wood-colored, double house, which though just over the line into Groton, seems to stretch out hospitable arms, as if to take in the whole place. In the dooryard grow many things sweet and green. The highway runs on all sides of the house, and a triangular green is before the door. This house was constructed by Dr. Dudley Woodbridge in 1750, and is built against a bank, so that the upper windows in the rear are on a level with the highway. A long



COL. NATHAN WHEELER HOUSE.

ell stretches out toward the road on the south, which has been frequently occupied by shoemakers. This house is now owned by Mrs. Lucy Stanton Wheeler, a daughter of one of the Groton Heights heroes, Edward Stanton, who was seriously wounded at the battle there in 1781. She can tell you of many an interesting event which occurred in her childhood, ninety-six years ago, and is proud to show her friends the gold spoon which was presented to her as a Real Daughter of a True Patriot, by the society of the Daughters of the Revolution of Groton and Stonington, of which she is an honorary member.

This house was once a Tavern, and is said to have sheltered many famous men on their journeys to and from New York and Boston by stage coach, as it is situated on the old Turnpike between those cities.

Three miles further east is the house of Col. Nathan Wheeler, which was built about 1790, and is still standing, well preserved. Where now grand elms and maples cast their shade on the broad green before the door, could once be seen the grand change of horses on the arrival of the stage coach, which occurred twice



STEPHEN AVERY HOUSE.

each day, going both east and west, between New York and Providence. This was quite a novel and exciting time, and the children of the neighborhood, and even from several miles distant, were allowed as a great treat to go and see the passing of the stage. The horses, four and sometimes six, were unhitched in a twinkling, and fresh ones stood ready to take their places, and proceed at once on their way. About 1835 saw the last of this mode of conveyance on this road, as the railroad was opened in 1837, from Stonington to Providence. This house was occupied by Col. Nathan's son, Giles, and after his death it

was sold to various parties, but now belongs to Miss Bertha York.

A little above the village of old Mystic, stands the Stephen Avery house, built by him about 1750. The small window panes and the unusual number of windows, four in the first story at the west, three above and four in the attic, with the many outer doors, shows it to have been "Of ye olden time." Mr. Avery had a most benevolent heart, and having no children of his own till late in life, he had helped and cared for his



EBENEZER WILLIAMS HOUSE.

nieces and nephews and many others, as he was one of a large family of children, and had four brothers in the Revolutionary war, one of whom died, and two others were fearfully wounded at Fort Griswold. At one time a private school was kept in the upper part of the house. He also built a grist mill west of his house, on Sicanemus brook, which was afterward sold to the First Mystic Manufacturing Co., chartered in 1814. The number of beautiful and romantic drives and walks about this place and the nearby village, make it the natural rendezvous for artists and lovers of nature, of which there are so many that

every year finds the houses which will accommodate guests, full to overflowing. This place is now owned by the grandsons of Mr. Avery, Mr. Stephen and Everett Brown.

A short distance above here, stands the little whitewashed house, which was at one time used as the farm-house for the Stephen Avery place, but long before that time it was the home of a Williams family, perhaps the very first who came to Stonington from Roxbury, Mass., in 1685, as the home of this first Ebenezer has never been located anywhere else. He married

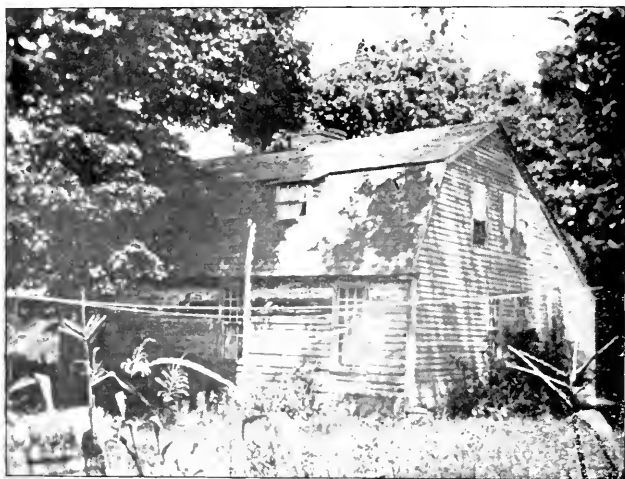


NATHANIEL WILLIAMS HOUSE.

Mary Wheeler, granddaughter of the first Thomas Wheeler. It has been occupied during these years by many different families. Here lived Fiddler Bill Chesebrough in the early part of 1800, also later the Garside family, who are remembered by the present generation.

The son, Nathaniel Williams, lived near the junction of the Lantern Hill road with the turnpike, where the house yet stands, looking strong and stanch for many years yet, though built in 1720. It is in good condition, a piazza has been added at the front, which destroys the plain outline of the upper part of the front

porch, and somewhat detracts from its old style; the four feet shingles on the north side are still to be seen, and within the house one's imagination can easily run riot in the low ceiled rooms, made to seem still lower by the summer beams, which seem drooping to meet you as you enter. The square front hall is quite large and similar to those built in the present time. The east room has been partitioned off, but it was originally twenty feet square. Here it was that their daughter, Anne, stood, when she married Col. William Ledyard, of Fort Griswold



THOMAS WILLIAMS HOUSE.

fame, in 1781. Little did she dream on that blissful morning of her wedding day, that so much of pride and sorrow was to be mingled in her lot in life: for he it was who commanded the Fort at Groton until finding further resistance useless, and the British swarming in upon them, led by Capt. Bloomfield, who enquired, "Who commands this fort?" Col. Ledyard replied, "I did sir, but you do now," at the same time handing the hilt of his sword to him, when Capt. Bloomfield took it, and plunged it into the bosom of our brave officer, who fell on his face and immediately expired. This historic house has been in the



Williams family through succeeding generations ever since its erection, and the land joined that of Mr. Joshua Hempstead, who was a friend of Mr. Williams: in his Diary, he speaks of him many times and of being one of the bearers at Mr. Williams' funeral, with Major Israel Hewitt, Lieut. William Denison, Capt. Gallup, Revs. Mr. Rossiter and Fish; so we find in those days that the ministers acted as bearers also. A few years ago this house was sold by Mrs. Elisha Miner of Groton, she being the last of the family in possession.



RICHARD HEMPSTEAD HOUSE.

Anne Ledyard's brother, Thomas Williams, lived quite near in the low gambrel-roofed house, whose chimney is built about halfway between the ridgepole and the plates on the long sloping north roof, which nearly reaches the ground. This house stands almost enveloped in shrubbery and trees on the road which leads up to the other old Williams house. It originally faced the west, and the double door remains on that side, which opens into an entry where the back stairs lead above. Directly in the middle of the floor of this room is a trap door, where goods or valuables were placed when danger was near. When

the road was laid out on the east side of the house, it obligingly opened its front door to the east. Many interesting facts are gleaned about this old house, which rests contentedly in this shady and quiet nook, where in 1787, Thomas Williams brought his bride, Abigail Hempstead, daughter of Christopher and Mary. The old Hempstead house on the plains has long since gone to ruin, but the records of the Hempsteads as a family are preserved in the Hempstead Diary, which is now published by the New London County Historical Society. This house has remained in the Williams family until within a few years, and was occupied till their death by Mr. Thomas Williams' two

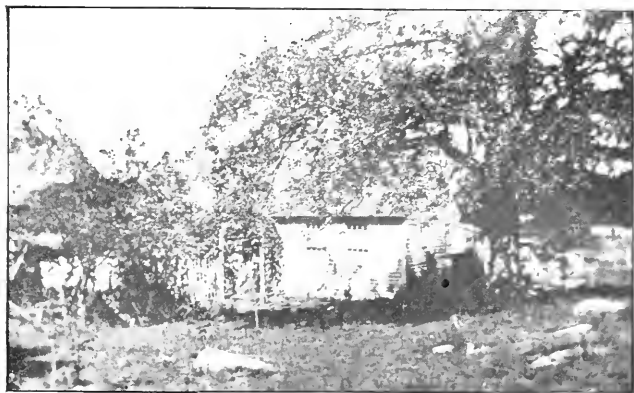


THE MARTIN WHITE HOUSE.

daughters, Sally and Abby, who were the aunts of everybody in the neighborhood, young and old.

The Richard Hempstead house is situated on the road as you go to Lantern Hill from Mystic, and still stands modest and unassuming with its gambrel roof, firm and true as though it was only fifty years old instead of nearer one hundred and fifty. This Richard was a descendant of the first Robert of New London: he resided here and his parents before him. His wife was Lucy Davis, who at his death married a Mr. Holt of New London, and afterwards Mr. Jedediah Briggs of Rhode Island. The house has since passed into other hands, and is now owned by Mr. Philetus Brown.

Situated in the northwest part of the town, is Wolf Neck, which obtained its name from the fact that in the early days an Indian killed a wolf there, and hung it up by the neck on a tree near the summit of the hill, where it could be plainly seen by the passersby, and ever since "Wolf Neck" has held its name. Quite near here, Mr. Martin White owns and lives in a one-story, double house, protected from the roadway by the fence which encloses large apple trees, whose golden fruit, in the autumn, lies upon the ground in rich abundance. This house was built by Samuel Stanton's brother some one hundred



KELLOGG HOUSE.

and twenty-five years ago, and later was occupied by Mr. Amos Shaw, who married Hannah Leeds.

The David Kellogg house stands near by at the corner of the road, with trees, vines and shrubs before the door. It was built in 1793, a one-story half house, by Mr. Kellogg, who was a carpenter, and a most thorough and painstaking one. He had a family of twelve children. When they were growing up and the home nest was becoming too small for such a numerous family, he added on the west half, and made it into the present double house which is now well preserved and good for a century more. It is set back from the road, within an enclosure,

the entrance to which is a little wooden gate, worn smooth by the generations of little fingers which have pushed it to and fro as they have passed in and out.

The Eldredge house, later called the Elisha Bennet house because owned by him, is still standing, low and brown, on the old road from head of Mystic to Wolf Neck, set back a little from the gaze of the traveller, cozily sheltered by some old apple trees, whose boughs hang shelteringly over this old landmark, with its broad stone doorsteps, which have been trodden by so many



ELDREDGE HOUSE.

feet in bygone days : for here came Capt. Daniel Eldredge (then called Eldred) from Rhode Island in 1704, as the town records and Joshua Hempstead's Diary show, and here at the Road Church his children were baptized, and he undoubtedly built this house. Some of his children went back to Kingstown, and James is recorded there, but his son, Christopher, came here to this place, and lived after marrying Molly Hempstead, granddaughter of Joshua Hempstead. Rev. George Whitfield came here while he was visiting Mr. Hempstead in 1747, who lived quite near by. This house is now owned by Mr. Benjamin

Brown, and shelters one whose artistic mind and eye sees the beautiful in all things about her.

About Wolf Neck are many old houses, and driving down through the grand old "Witch woods" we find a schoolhouse long since closed, where in earlier days religious meetings were often held, led by the persons in the adjoining towns, who were interested to carry the Gospel to those about them. It was here that the old colored man, a native of that place, who lived in a little tumble-down house a short distance from the road, exhorted his audience, "To walk as well as talk."

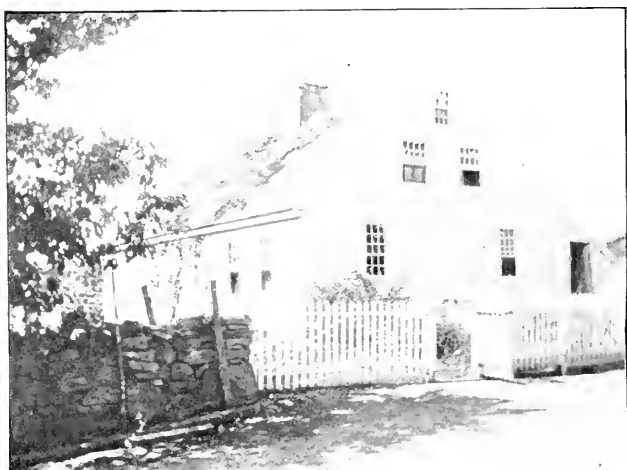


GEN. JOHN GALLUP HOUSE.

A short distance below this schoolhouse stands an old wood-colored story and a half house, the ridge of its roof sloping inward, showing plainly that it has stood here for many a long year. It was occupied by Gen. John Gallup, who married Hannah Denison in 1782, but it was probably built long before. He was active in the war of the Revolution, and soon after its close, he removed to Knox, New York state, with his cousins, Samuel Gallup and brothers, and established a settlement there. They had a large family of children, of whom Esther married Mr. Ebenezer Denison. She was born here and years after returned on a visit to this old home of her childhood, and carried a rose-

bush from here to her new home in the then west. Their daughter, Mary, married Capt. Warren Holmes, who is so well known as the Captain from Mystic, who has been around Cape Horn more times than any other sailor.

A short distance below the Gen. John Gallup house, we turn to the west, and driving along the shaded road, we come to a gate from where we can see a white, sunshiny, low house that has belonged in the Bennett family for six generations, and ever since the land was granted to them by Gov. Winthrop.



THE BENNETT HOUSE.

The old house was built in the latter part of 1600, and stood a trifle to the east of the present one, which was erected in 1773. At the rear of the house is the old style lean-to where the wood-colored rafters are in plain sight. The room has an east and west door, through which can be seen the garden with its fruit trees and vines climbing over the walls. Within, the rooms low and large, are full of cheer and warmth. The west one has been enlarged: over the fire-place are broad and deep panelings, while in an opposite corner is the long buffet, with its shelves filled with old-fashioned crockery. For many years

four generations have occupied this house at one and the same time. It is still held by the family, and bids fair to remain so for many more years.

The village of Old Mystic, around which so much of historic interest centers, lies nestled among the hills, with the Mystic River sparkling in its graceful curves and stretching away to the south. Several hundred-year-old houses are found within its limits. The first Clift house is a little northeast of the Old Hyde factory. It is now painted yellow and stands somewhat alone upon the old Turnpike road, larger than its neighbors and well preserved, though built about 1790 by Amos Clift,

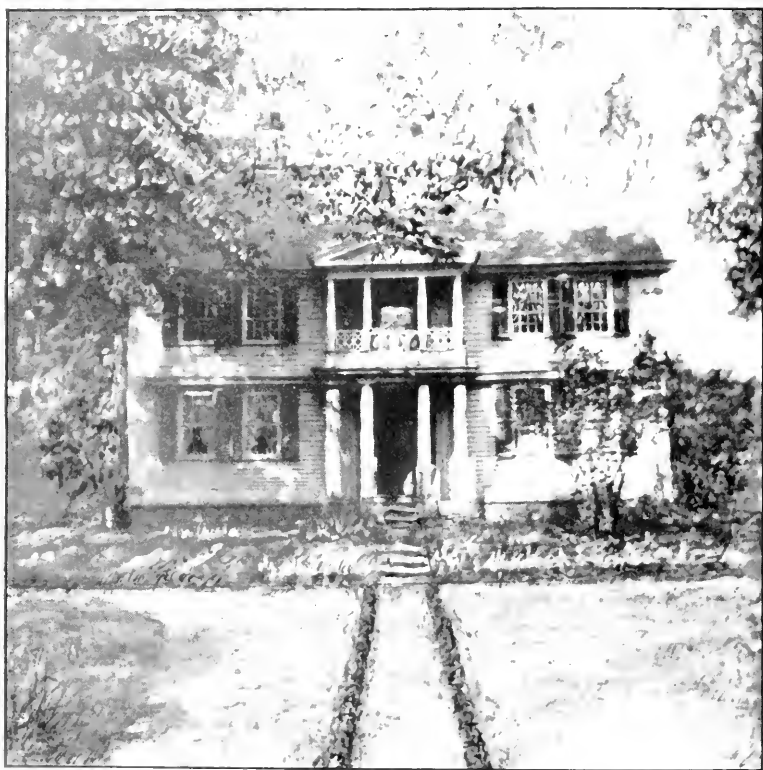


CLIFT HOUSE.

when he came to Stonington from Preston and married Esther Williams. Soon after they moved to Berne, New York state, and his wife dying in a short time, he returned to Stonington, where he married again and had a large family of children.

The old John Hyde homestead a short distance below, was built by Mr. Enoch Burrows in the opening years of 1800, in a more elegant fashion than the ordinary house of those days, large and square, with hipped roof and double porticos at the front door and directly above. Mr. Burrows presented it to his daughter Lucy, who married Mr. John Hyde in 1808.

Here, under the same roof and the same shingles, were born their fifteen children, and one grandchild, and as the years rolled on, and the children, and children's children came to the old home, it became a busy hive as well as the center of life and fashion in the village. Sometimes as many as twenty-eight



HYDE MANSION.

were in the family during the summer months, when their friends gathered within these hospitable walls. Among these were two of the Rodgers family, one of whom became Admiral, and the other Commodore, George Rodgers, who lost his life at the bombardment of Fort Champlain; Capt. Ringold of



the U. S. Army, who fought in the war with Mexico, also Lieut. A. P. Rodgers, who was killed in leading the "Forlorn Hope" at Chapultepec, Mexico.

This house was the first in the place to be opened to the Methodist Itinerant, and in one of the front parlors meetings were held. In the east and west rooms were marble mantles and hearths with ornamented cast-iron backs and sides to the fire-places, where blazed the hickory logs, throwing out heat sufficient to warm the room and once to even crack the marble hearth. Mrs. Hyde was very fond of flowers, and the beautiful garden laid out with borders made a fine display for all; even the children delighted in it, as they saw them from the windows of the old schoolhouse near by. Mr. John Hyde was the oldest of fifteen children and became the father of the same number. It was indeed a proud moment when he came to the Polls, at the Road, with his eight sons and all voted the Whig ticket.

Two of the sons became ministers, and one daughter married Rev. James McDonald, a wonderfully impressive speaker and honored by all who knew him. He preached in New London for a time and was afterwards connected with a college in New Jersey. A son, John Hyde, was editor of "The Parthenon" (a magazine of Union College), and valedictorian of his class, there. He was United States Consul to San Juan, Porto Rico, under President Lincoln, and was once introduced by Daniel Webster as "one of the brightest jewels of the Whig party." He was a graduate of the Harvard Law school and a medical school in New York City, and was proprietor and editor of the New London Gazette, while he was considered by talented men as mentally qualified for any office in the gift of the people of the United States. This Hyde house has been sold and rented for years, and the family scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, but still pleasant memories cluster about it, and influences emanating from here have made, and will yet make other homes better and happier.

A little farther down on the opposite side of the street, stands the old home of Elijah Williams, always called the Case Bottle house. Recently verandahs have been added to the upper and lower stories, somewhat changing its appearance. Here dwelt Elijah Williams in 1796, who married Mehitable Rossiter, granddaughter of our Rev. Ebenezer Rossiter, who preached at the Road Church in 1722: she was known to all the villagers as Aunt Hetty.

The oldest house in the village is a little farther down, near-



ELIJAH WILLIAMS HOUSE.

ly opposite where the old school house used to stand. A little low, wood-colored house, called the Chester house, or more familiarly, the Washington house, as it is said that George Washington once dined here when passing through the place. It has the east and west sides covered with the old time shingles, three feet long, and as you enter the front door the little square hall invitingly receives you: the high shelf, built out from the rear of this wall, was used in days of yore, to place the band-boxes upon, containing the Sunday bonnets, which

could be taken out of the box and put on the head the last thing as one left the house. The rooms on either side of the door are pleasant and the sun streams in through the small panes of glass which are in the windows. It is now being renovated by Mr. Brenton Copp and will add much of new style architecture to this street in the village.

The Leonard Williams house is virtually unchanged, located opposite the old Hyde store, now owned by Mr. Horace Williams : it is known to the older inhabitants as the Amos Williams' hotel or the Old Wayside Inn, where once stopped the four-horse stages that ran from New London to Providence. The



CHESTER HOUSE.

stages and horses were owned by Mr. Frank Amy, and Mr. Giles Hallam, Jr. drove one for a time. At this tavern, travellers were fed and regaled at the bar: it was also made famous at one time by the arrival of Daniel Webster, who was on his way from Boston to Washington, and reached Stonington the day the Lexington was burned; as there was no means of transportation to New York from there, except to get to New London, Mr. Capron, who kept the Steamboat Hotel, where Mr. Webster put up, employed Mr. Russell Wheeler, who was in his service there, to procure a sleigh, as snow was on

the ground, and take Mr. Webster to the Ferry at Groton Bank, but finding themselves chilled, they stopped at the Inn at Mystic to warm both the outer and the inner man, after which they proceeded on their way to Groton, where they made a call upon Mother Bailey of Revolutionary fame. This house is still in the Williams family, standing firm and secure under its protection of fine old shade trees, close to the roadside. After Mr. Amos Williams' death, his son, Leonard Williams and family occupied it, and the beautiful flowers about



AMOS WILLIAMS HOTEL.

the yard and in the rooms, with all the old-time garments stored away in the chambers above, will long be remembered as well as those who made this home so delightful.

The large white house, with three tiers of bay windows, standing near the centre of the village, with its gardens in the rear and a delightful view of the Mystic River winding among its green islands just before the door, is the Enoch Burrows house, built in 1790. One of his daughters married Esquire Elias Brown, and lived there for a time. The long flight of marble steps which leads up to the front door came from Mr.

Burrows' marble quarry, located in western Massachusetts near Pittsfield. From the same quarry was brought the marble to build the new City Hall in Philadelphia, which occupies four blocks. The house also contains a marble sink and a large stirring dish, all from the same quarry, which was brought down the Connecticut river in some kind of a water craft, and landed at the dock before the door.

Mr. Burrows was a large landholder, owning many beautiful farms and Mystic Island, originally called Ram's Island. He



ENOCH BURROWS HOUSE.

married Esther Denison, daughter of Grandmother Jane: she was a very energetic woman, a housekeeper and homemaker of New England's best type, large-hearted, generous, sociable and entertaining, an excellent cook, and gave much attention to all appetizing things which please the eye and appeal to the palate. She had a good force of domestics to execute her commands, and when her table was seen covered with china, glass and silver, and loaded with choice viands, one needed no second invitation to partake of her hospitality. Her husband was a

man of commanding figure, six feet two inches in his stockings; genial, kind-hearted and capable, and in his later years, in his home in West Troy, New York, was called Judge Burrows. Their son, Silas, afterwards lived here: he was interested in ship-building, and engaged in commercial pursuits in New York, and was also in the whaling and sealing business. He made several visits to Brazil and Hong Kong, China, where he established a commercial house: he left there in 1859 for the last time and made his home in this village, where he died in 1870. His children



DR. MANNING HOUSE.

occupied the house as a summer home at various times, and it now belongs to his grandchildren. It is built in a grander style than most houses of its age: the long hall and side verandah, large rooms and windows protected by their iron balconies, make it noticeable as a fine old residence. In the September gale of 1815, the tide swept high up on the steps. In front of this house once stood a gambrel-roofed store, where John Hyde began his business education with Mr. Enoch Burrows.

At the foot of Quaquataug's western slope stands the Dr. Manning house on a little eminence with ample grounds before

the door. It was built about 1797 by a Mr. Eldredge, and owned by Stephen Avery, of whom it was purchased by Dr. Mason Manning about 1825, when he came here from Windham, Ct. Here he lived when he married his second wife, Miss Harriet Chesebrough Leeds, in 1829. Mr. George Greenman occupied the house with him at the time as it was arranged for two families : there was also a store kept in a little building just at the entrance to the present driveway near the street. This house is large and double, the sides are covered with shingles



CHRISTOPHER LEEDS HOUSE.

which were placed there when it was erected, though the roof has been covered three times. Dr. Manning was a physician of the old school, able and trustworthy, and resided here till his death.

On November 15th, 1815, a tract of land was bought in Old Mystic of Stephen Avery, by Thomas and Christopher Leeds, where the quaint house which stands high up on the east bank of the Mystic River is now seen : the style of the house with its gambrel roof and "overhang" with its little lean-to at the rear shows that it must have been built before the sale of this land.

Mr. Christopher Leeds married Mercy Hobart, and lived there in the early part of 1800. Just below here was a shipyard where vessels were built. Enoch Burrows, John Hyde and Christopher Leeds were partners in this business. One of the vessels built here in 1812 was the *Flambeaux*; she was designed by Mr. Leeds himself, and was a brigantine of 300 tons, and was sold to the United States government. Thus we see that in those days this quiet valley was a busy place and the scene of active operations.

On the road that leads to the village of Mystic, stands a



LEWIS HOUSE.

house, large and square, painted white, situated on a side hill, commanding a fine view of the surrounding country. It looks like a modern house, but the original foundations are of the house built by Capt. Joseph Gallup in 1720. It has been improved and kept up by the different families, who have made it their abiding place, among whom were Dea. Samuel Langworthy, his son, George, Dea. B. F. Lewis and others, till now it belongs to Mr. James Norman.

At the east of the village rises the grand old Quaquinaug Hill which commands an extensive view of the surrounding country and Long Island Sound, while nearer flows the Mystic



River. At its very summit, a road turns and winds away among the pleasant meadows for a quarter of a mile, till you reach a typical old New England home, built by Nehemiah Williams in 1719. It is a large, two-story, double house painted white, and it seems almost impossible that it is so old, till you enter the ell which is evidently the oldest part and remains the same as it was originally built, with the various rooms out of the large kitchen: sink room, buttery, cheese room, press room, milk room and meal room, all with the bare floors kept clean and sweet.



PRENTICE WILLIAMS HOUSE.

The old cheese press still stands in its accustomed place, while the kitchen has the old hooks in the ceiling, the old-style half doors at the west and east, through which a view of the garden makes a pretty picture. A little bedroom off this kitchen seemingly just large enough to take in a cot, was the sleeping room used in those early days. In the dining room stands the grandfather's clock, still evenly ticking away the hours, as in the days of yore. In the west room is the panelling to be seen on the entire east side, and over the fire-place is a little cupboard,

while in the southwest corner is the tall corner buffet which was built into nearly all the old houses. This is filled with ancient crockery in the usual colors of pink, blue and pencil ware. The summer beams and cornices are in plain sight in all the rooms, lower and upper. Best of all is the children's play-room (for there are many little Williams children yet in this old home). In the long north room above, the rafters are exposed and the bare floor, with its broad oak boards divided off, is the play-room of each child: the girls have houses and dolls in theirs, and the boys have barns with cattle and horses. In the corner stands the very same little old narrow bedstead which used to stand in the tiny bedroom below, and is now occupied by one of the present generations of little Williamses. This house and farm have belonged in this same family since the house was built, having been left from one generation to the next, till now it is in possession of the eighth, Mr. Prentice Williams and family. Mr. Nehemiah Williams' son, Park, who was the great-grandfather, was in the Revolution in 1776, and again as drummer in Capt. William Stanton's Company in 1780.

There were several other Williams houses about this hill: the one down the road but a short distance just back of where Mr. Erastus Holmes now lives, was the Joshua Williams house, which has been taken down within the last fifty years. This Mr. Williams was married three times, and his descendants are worthy men and women, who are located in different states. Mr. Sanford Williams lived south of here a few rods, in a one story brown house which was recently burned, only a heap of ruins now marking the spot. The old schoolhouse stood on the south side of the road, but that, too, has been removed within the last half century. There were two other old houses very near here, but time has removed the traces: in one of them, which was built by Samuel Mason, the son of Capt. John, lived John Reynolds in 1669, and in the other Mr. Elias Stanton was born, who afterwards moved to New York state.

At the very summit of Quaquinaug, on the site of the first

Williams house on this hill, stands a double mansion house set amid its white enclosure, which was built in 1775. The first house which stood here before this was erected in 1712 but was burned down. It happened on this wise: Dea. Eleazer Williams' twelve year old daughter, Martha, or Patty, as she was called, was sent upstairs towards night to get something from a small closet where flax was kept, and as she carried a lighted candle, a spark flew from it, which quickly ignited the flax :



DEACON ELEAZER WILLIAMS HOUSE.

child-like, frightened at the mischief wrought, she hurriedly closed the door, and ran down stairs, telling no one: soon the flames were seen, but as there was no adequate means of extinguishing them, the house was reduced to ashes in a very short time. Patty grew up and married the great-great-grandson of the famous Capt. George Denison, and lived in the present old Denison house, near Mystic.

## CHAPTER FIFTH.

“We sat within the farm house old,  
Whose windows looking o’er the bay  
Gave to the sea-breeze, damp and cold,  
An easy entrance night and day,  
Not far away we see the port,  
The strange, old-fashioned, silent town,  
The lighthouse, the dismantled fort,  
The wooden houses, quaint and brown.”

On a high hill which commands a beautiful view just east of the village of Mystic, Ct., stands the Stanton Williams house, formerly owned by Capt. John Stanton, son of Thomas the first, who married Rev. William Thompson's daughter. He was educated to be a teacher of the Gospel to the Indians, but afterwards was engaged in other work. He was in the Narragansett fight in 1675. His home was near the village of Mystic, bounded by lands of Capt John Gallup and Capt. George Denison. The house which he built was near the entrance to Mr. Elias Williams' present residence, and must have been a large one, as the cellar yet indicates. His son Joseph lived there till 1712, when he built a new house on the brow of the hill, very near the present one, and his son Joseph was carried there as a baby: he grew up and married, and still remained there till he divided his land, and gave this house to his son William, and his land to the south to his son Nathan, who built the present house, now occupied by Mr. Stanton Williams, in 1777.

It was at first a one-story house with no ell till 1798 when Mr. Nathan Stanton moved to New York state, and his brother William rented the old homestead and came to live at this place.

when he raised it to two stories, and since then it has been somewhat improved and renovated. A short distance from here, down the hill, at the north and quite near the present ice houses, used to stand the old, old schoolhouse, built in the middle of 1700, which was so close to the great rock, still there by the roadside, that the children used to reach out of the windows after a rain-fall, and dip their slates in the pools of water which had filled the little hollows in the rock.

Major John Mason, whose military career is well known and



STANTON WILLIAMS HOUSE.

appreciated in Stonington, where he had much land given him by the Colony of Connecticut, bequeathed to his son Samuel that part between Pequotsepos Brook and the land of the emigrant Thomas Miner, and to his son Lieut. Daniel Mason all that part west of Thomas Miner's to Blackmore's Head (a rock which was the eastern bound of Capt. George Denison's second grant of land in Stonington and is located on the east side of the present farm of Henry M. Palmer).

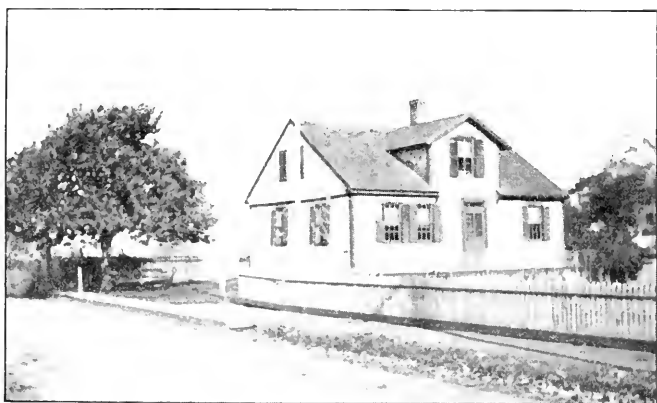
This youngest son of Major John's became Captain and occupied in Stonington an ample domain confirmed by the Colony

to his father near the borders of Long Island Sound. This estate comprised "Chippechaug Island in Mystic Bay," since then called "Mason's Island," and a large tract of upland and meadow. He was commissioned quartermaster of the New London Co. Troop of Dragoons, Oct. 17th, 1673, in the 21st year of his age, was Lieut. Oct. 7th, 1701, and promoted to the rank of Captain. He was for a time instructor of the newly established school on the Plain in Norwich in 1679. This was after the death of his first wife, Miss Margaret, daughter of Edward Denison of Roxbury, Mass. He married again in 1679, Rebecca Hobart, and returned to Stonington as his permanent residence: he was closely identified with the interests of the town, representing it at times as Deputy in the General Court, and was influential in the affairs of the Colony. His descendants have ever since made this Island their home, and there is yet standing an old Mason house which is now occupied by those who are in direct line from Lieut. Daniel Mason.

"The Riding Way" which is now crossed by the bridge between the Island and the mainland was once crossed by boats, and at low water by those on horseback, and a story is told of the old negro boatman who carried travellers across, having been warned against taking a certain young man over who was known to be very partial to one of the young ladies on the Island, but whose relatives were very much opposed to his choice: they tried in various ways to coax and bribe the old negro to prevent his being carried across, but to no avail, for he was never able to decide upon the right man, consequently never knew when he was carrying him over: so this love story worked out its own gracious fulfillment.

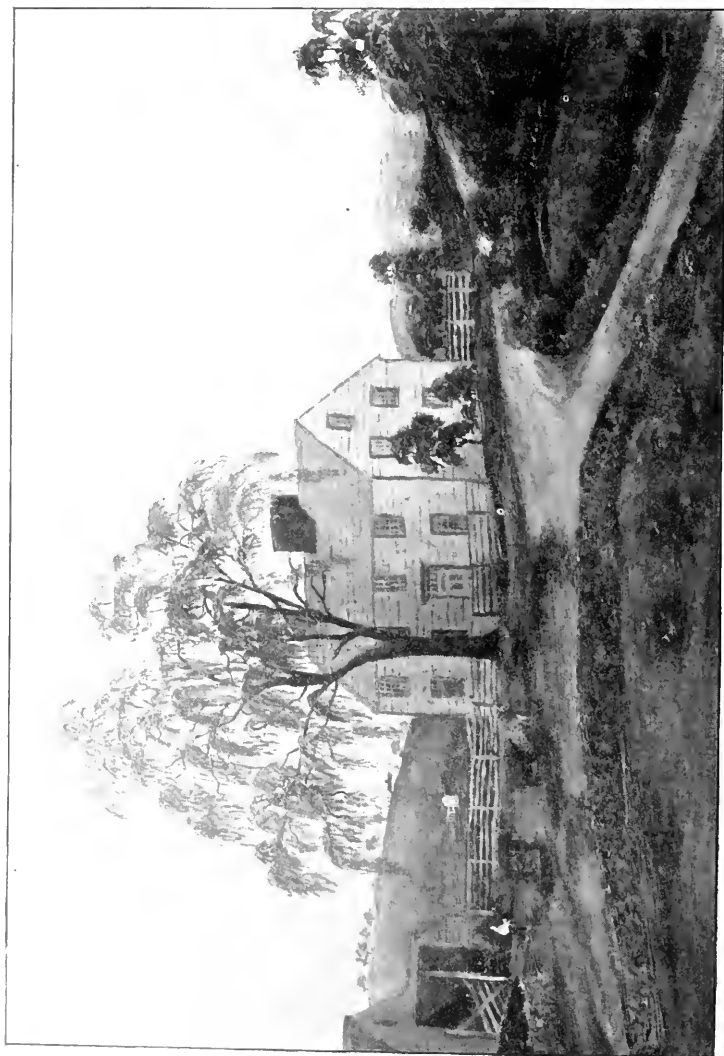
In the village of Mystic only one house remains over 100 years old, and that is the one now owned by Mr. Frank Dickenson on Denison St. It was called the Beebe Denison house. He married Hannah Chesebrough, half sister of Mr. Grandison Chesebrough, in 1784, and they lived there till her death in 1800. At that time only three houses were standing in the

present village of Mystic, this one, the John Denison house, and the one on Pistol Point; both of these are now gone. The latter was destroyed by fire, and the Denison house was taken down, the timbers and boards that were not too badly decayed being used to make mementos, or stored for future use. The large doorstep was placed in front of the new residence of Mr. Frederick Denison, where it can now be seen. There are several other houses in the village which approach the century mark, the one of Capt. Simeon Haley and his two brothers, George and Jeremiah, who built, one the steamboat hotel near his brother Simeon, and the other the present house now occu-



BEEBE DENISON HOUSE.

pied by Mr. John Manning. The house in which Capt. Jerry Holmes used to live was built about 1813, and two years later during the September gale, September 23, 1815, the water came to the upper cellar stair before they left the house. For many years Capt. Holmes's family lived on one side of the house and Mr. Charles Mallory's on the other. The two women occupied the same kitchen and cooked at the same fireplace. Capt. Holmes and wife were both very patriotic, he being active in the defence of Stonington. He also had command of the *Hornet* which was used to carry torpedoes, some of which were buried



JOHN DENISON HOMESTEAD.



in their cellar for some time before they were used in an attempt to blow up the British fleet.

Capt. George Denison's oldest son John, lived in the old Denison house situated at the foot of Mystic Hill, across the road west of the present blacksmith shop. It was the first house built in the village about 1669, and became a well known landmark. It always remained in the Denison family till it was taken down in 1883, and so is remembered by many yet living. Aunt Lavinia Denison also lived there and was a remarkable woman. Her Thanksgiving gatherings were a notable event in the village and everybody loved to meet and greet her on these occasions. She lived to a ripe old age and will be long remembered. John Denison's great-grandson Isaac, being in poor health, was not able to go into the Revolutionary war, but opened this mansion house, in which he lived, for the shelter and care of many refugees from Long Island, when the British held the same, during the war.

Mr. Isaac Denison's son Ebenezer, married for his second wife Mrs. Phebe Moore (Wickham Smith): she was a woman of remarkable worth, born in 1769, and at nineteen years united with the Cong. Church. At the age of twenty-four she organized the first Sunday School on Long Island and the second in America. Her husband, Mr. Joseph Wickham, died in 1808 and three years later she married Edward Smith of Stonington and soon after started the first Sunday School in Eastern Conn. This was afterwards connected with the Road Church. After Mr. Smith's death, she went back to Long Island and there organized her third Sunday School: returning to Stonington in 1815, she married Mr. Denison and began a Sunday School in Mystic which was the first in that vicinity, and it was attended by large numbers of people, who came from all around the town. She had decided views on temperance, and the following story is told of her: a traveller who stopped at her door said "Madam, can you give me some cider?" to which she replied, that they did not keep cider for travellers. "Well, can't I stay over

night here?" "No, sir, we don't keep a public house." "But, madam, you may not know who I am, and the Bible says we must not forget to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." "Very true, sir," she said, "but angels don't ask for cider."

Mr. John Denison's granddaughter Prudence, lived in this house also, and was a very attractive young lady. She had many admirers and suitors, chief among them being Mr. William Denison, a distant cousin called wicked Will. One day



HENRY M. PALMER RESIDENCE.

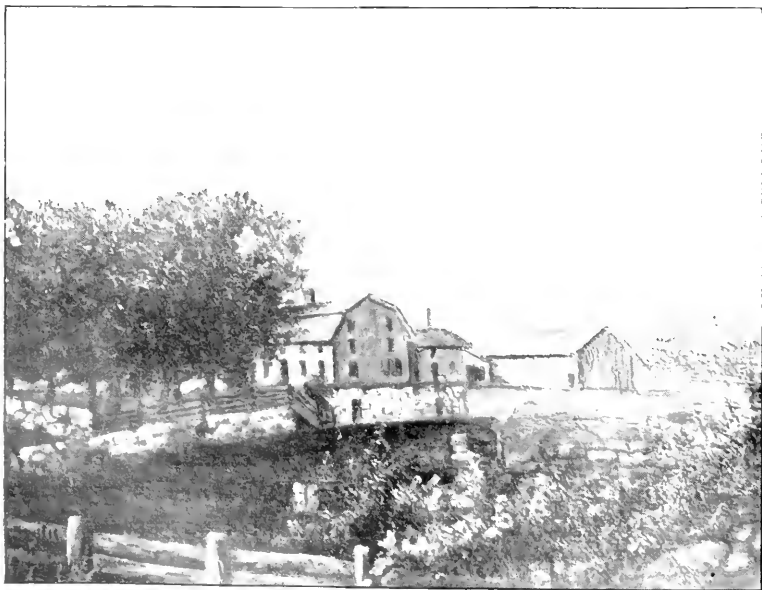
the minister, who was also charmed with Miss Denison, was stopping to dinner with the family, and while asking a blessing at the table (which according to custom was more the length of a prayer) wicked Will passed the window, and by some trick of the eye, conveyed to Miss Prudence's mind, that he particularly wished to see her. It is quite evident that Miss Denison was not much impressed by the minister or his words, for slipping quietly from her seat at the table, she met Mr. Denison at the front door and stealthily they entered the best room, where they enjoyed each other's society for a good part of the after-

noon. The minister, of course, upon lifting his eyes, missed the bewitching face of Miss Prudence, and later was informed of the cause of her absence: meeting Mr. Denison the next day he expostulated with him, complaining that he had deprived him of Miss Denison's society and taken her from the table during his prayer. He was answered by Mr. Denison in scriptural language: "Sir, you must watch as well as pray." It is needless to say that Mr. Denison married Miss Prudence and they lived in the Prentice Denison house which used to stand just east of the present schoolhouse in Quiambaug, where Mr. Henry Baldwin now lives; he also owned land which extended over Montauk Avenue.

His son, Jonathan Denison, built the present house in 1745, which stands there today, so renovated and well preserved that one could scarcely believe that any part of it could be reckoned by centuries. This house originally stood on the opposite side of the road, a two story, gambrel roof, half house, but later Mr. Noyes Palmer, who married Miss Dorothy Stanton in 1784, bought this land of Col. Oliver Smith, who lived there, and enlarged it by adding a half to the west side, making it a double house: his son, Dea. Noyes Palmer, also lived here, and still later it was moved across the road and reconstructed into its now modern style, by its present owner, Mr. Henry M. Palmer. The view from this hill can scarcely be described, but any one who takes the drive towards the Sound, seeing the blue water of the great ocean glistening in the distance and the beauties of distant hill and near-by valley, where Quiambaug Cove gracefully curves, now in, now out, between its green banks, can but think, perhaps, living among all this God-given beauty may have had an uplifting influence upon wicked Will, for when about 60 years old, he became a religious man and abandoned his evil habits. His property, which had been put into the hands of a conservator, was restored to him, and he became prudent and exemplary, and was respected by his neighbors. No higher eulogy need any man desire.



JUDGE GILBERT COLLINS RESIDENCE.



JAMES NOYES HOUSE.

The drive down Mistuxet Avenue shows us the Old Borough of Stonington, so situated reaching out into Fisher's Island Sound, with Pawcatuck Bay stretching up on the east and Stonington Harbor on the west, that we can understand why it is called by the older inhabitants "The Point", for it seems only a point of land reaching into the water which flows far back upon either side of the village. At the foot of the eastern slope of Palmer's Hill, in what is now called Umphrey's Orchard, was once a hut built and occupied by two freed slaves, Umphrey and his wife, who lived and died there. They formerly belonged to Mr. Thomas Noyes, who lived at the Harbor.

There were many slaves here in various families during the first half of 1700, and many stories have been related of them, one of which was told by Thomas Noyes (father of the Thomas above referred to, who married Mary Thompson in 1731) of a slave named Jumbo, who belonged to him. One moonlight night he brought his coat to his mistress, and asked her to mend it for him, saying, "If you will, I will tell you when Marsa Tom will come home." Marsa Tom was Captain of a vessel gone on a voyage to the West Indies, which was considerably overdue, and they were all feeling very anxious about him. She told him that she would mend the coat, so Jumbo went out into the lot north of the house, and went through all kinds of antics: finally he came in and said to her, "Tomorrow, at one o'clock, you look off, and you will see Marsa Tom's vessel coming." Sure enough, the next day at one o'clock, she looked off and saw the vessel coming outside the reef, beyond the Harbor at Stonington.

Leaving Montauk Avenue, we turn to the left into a comparatively new road, and come to another new old house, now owned by Judge Gilbert Collins of New Jersey, who comes with his family every summer to enjoy the beauty and health-giving vigor of hill and vale, cove and glen. This original structure was built by John Hallam, soon after his marriage to Miss Prudence Richardson, in 1683, the land having belonged

to her brother, by gift from their father, and purchased by Mr. Hallam. It was afterwards sold by them to Mr. Charles Phelps, whose sister married Mr. James Noyes, and the property was held in that name till sold to the present owner, who has improved it and the grounds about the place. Within the front hall a glance above shows the winding staircase, even to the third floor, and in the long dining room the large fire-place and mantel testify of age. Though remodelled and seemingly almost



NAT. NOYES HOUSE.

built anew, the old Hallam house underlies the present structure, making this the oldest house in town.

If one loves the water and enjoys the sight and sound of breaking waves and billows, let him visit the old house on Wamphassett Point just west of the village of Stonington, which faces the harbor, and so near to the water that with closed eyes one can easily imagine himself "rocked in the cradle of the deep." It is an ideal home for a sea captain and his family, of whom there have been many in this house to sail away over the ocean blue, and one of them, Captain Ben Noyes, born in

1780, commanded a ship running between New York and Italy for many years.

This house was built by Mr. John Whiting in the early part of 1700, who lived here when he was deacon of the Road Church in 1739. It is built a story and a half, with gambrel roof. The ground in front of the door used to be laid out in terraces of green banks which extended to the water's edge, while stone steps reached from one to the other, and old-fashioned roses bordered the walks. The interior is almost new, having been renovated by the present owner, Mr. Nat. P. Noyes. The cupboard in the north room, which was over the fire-place, with the little glass doors, has been taken away, also the panels and fluted columns on either side, which were there when it was built. When the whitewashed plaster had been removed, some pieces of dark, rich, figured paper was discovered on the dark plastered room, which had evidently been brought from England, as no paper so elegant as this was found here in those early days. When the cupboard was removed, among the debris was found an Indian moccasin made of some kind of leather, with the sole turned up and over to form the upper covering, and then gathered with a leather thong over the instep. In the attic, securely driven into the plates of the house, was found an iron ring, supposed to have been placed there to fasten some person, slave or free, who was insane, as no asylums were then known where those thus afflicted could be protected.

But a few feet north of this house used to stand another similarly built house, where the great-grandparents of the present owner lived in 1760, but it is not known who built it. Mr. and Mrs. Noyes died there at the great age of 92 and 94, and lie buried near the water in a graveyard where also lie the Hallams and Whittings. This old house was accidentally burned, taking fire from live coals in a pan of ashes which had been taken from the stove and set upon a chest while the occupant, Aunt Betsey, was out of the room, and in a few moments an

old landmark had disappeared. The old farm house owned by the Hallams once stood a little above here, but has long since passed away, and almost all knowledge of it also. The town records tell us that "in April 1751, Mr. John Whiting paid John Hallam £90 in old tenor bills for a quarter of an acre of land on the west side of the harbor, being part of the land which Mr. Thomas Noyes, Jr. now improves."

Near here on Darling Hill, most beautifully situated, overlooking Long Island Sound, stands the house now owned by



SAMUEL DOUGHTY HOUSE.

Mr. Samuel Doughty of New York, who has remodelled the Langworthy house into a fine summer residence. This land originally belonged to the Hallams, and it is not known whether Dea. Samuel Langworthy bought or built the old house which stood here when he moved to it from the Lewis place at Old Mystic, but he lived here with his wife, who was Ethelinda Davis of Hopkinton, and the daughter of Joseph and Mary, whom he married in 1796. Afterwards he moved to Stonington and married, second, Lydia, daughter of Dea. Fellows. His son Henry took down the old house and built about it,



living in various parts of it at the same time, until he had made a fine country house called the "Farmer's Palace."

On our way to Stonington, we pass the Grandison Chesebrough place, standing in a most beautiful spot overlooking the water, at a corner of the road near the Catholic Cemetery. It is now a most commodious barn, but the large gambrel roofed building was once a comfortable home with a busy household. It



GRANDISON BARN.

was built by Mr. Nathaniel Chesebrough about 1758: he married Hannah Wheeler and second Mary Hallam; they had a large family of children. Their son Enoch married Sally Sheffield and lived here, and their son, Rev. Amos Chesebro, is now living at West Hartford, Ct. Mr. Nathaniel Chesebrough's youngest child was Grandison, who later owned this place where he lived till his death in 1855, and the name of the Grandison house has ever since clung to the place.

## CHAPTER SIXTH.

Often I think of the beautiful town  
That is seated by the sea,  
Often in thought go up and down  
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,  
Strange to me now are the forms I meet  
When I visit the dear old town,  
But the native air is pure and sweet,  
And the trees that o'ershadow each well known street,  
Are singing their beautiful song.

—*Longfellow.*

I am indebted to Miss Emma W. Palmer for much of the following chapter.

In the village of Stonington, we find many houses a hundred years old and more. On the west side of Water Street we see the Capt. Nathaniel Palmer or Peleg Brown house, as Capt. Palmer married the daughter of Mr. Brown in 1798, and came into possession of this house: he also owned the adjoining property on the north and the dock. At the time of the great September gale, this large house was lifted from its foundation by the force of the waves, and one end of it dropped into the cellar. It was replaced by Mr. Samuel Chesebro's father and as there were no jackscrews or modern implements in those days, he lifted it gradually back into place by wedges. What an undertaking it must have been with such appliances. Peleg Brown was a ship builder and also a merchant, for in 1816 he was in Augusta, Georgia, and wrote to C. Billings, Esquire, as to the price of cotton and tobacco.

On the corner of Water and Harmony Streets, we see the long, low house known as the old Dr. Wm. Hyde place, built by Rev. John Rathbone, the first Baptist minister of the Ston-

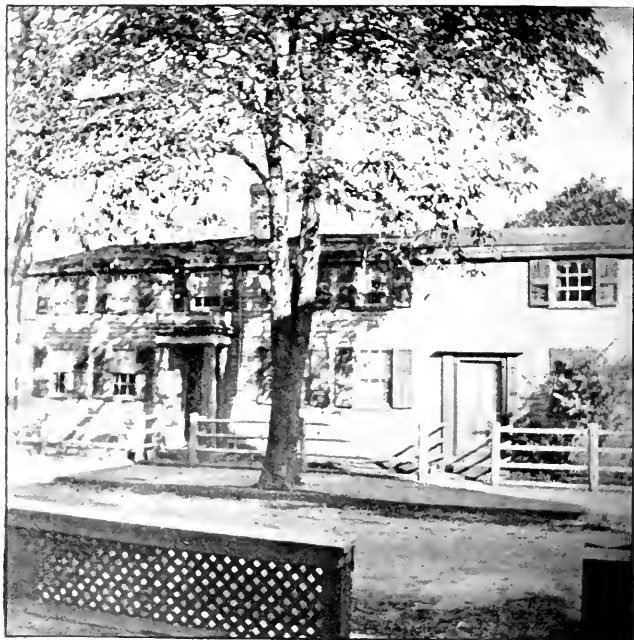
ington Church in 1775. Later he sold it to Dr. Hyde who married Rhoda Palmer in 1808, who lived and died here. He was the good doctor for every household and was sent for, no matter who was sick or what was the cause for wanting him. The Doctor would come in with a good deal of bluster and fuss, and sometimes with some good-natured profanity, and before he saw the patient or investigated the trouble, he would call Nancy Brown to get the bowl and bandages necessary for blood letting, and then would follow the examination of the tongue



CAPT. ALEX PALMER PLACE.

and the operation of phlebotomy to the amount of a bowl full of the fluid of which it is now considered so necessary to have a good supply. If the invalid had consumptive tendencies, this was considered a most important step, to get relieved of a surplus of bad blood from which the patient was suffering: this was followed by copious portions of calomel and julup, and if the person had a good strong constitution, there was perhaps an even chance of recovery. Many stories are told of old Dr. Hyde and his wife, who was almost as good a doctor as her husband, but his brusque way covered a warm and tender heart.

and though he scolded and scowled outwardly, the patient was sure of his help and sympathy. This house has been altered but little, and the small office on the south side so long used by the old Doctor and his son is still there. This son, William, married, first, a daughter of Capt. Ephraim Williams, and second, Ellen Williams, daughter of Gen. William Williams, and she long survived him.



DR. WILLIAM HYDE HOUSE.

The Polly Breed house is an old gambrel roofed house standing at the west end of Church St. facing east. The front door was originally on the south side, and had three very large, rough stone steps going up to it, but in the great gale these were lifted and carried some distance away. The house itself came very near being swept away, and after the gale had subsided the bowsprit of a large vessel lay on the west side of the

roof, where it had been driven by the force of the wind. Some say it was forced right through the side of the house; how



POLLY BREED HOUSE.

they got it off, history saith not. There is not much known about this house except that it is one of the oldest in the Borough, being built by Samuel Stanton and son Nathan, who

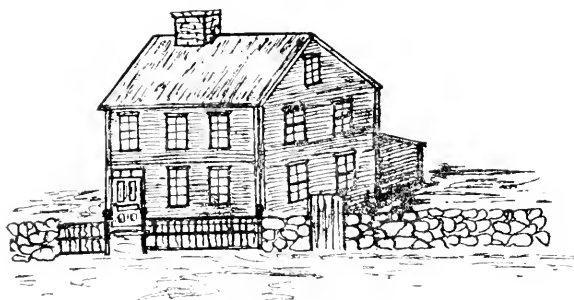


WM. TERRETT HOUSE.

came over from Pawcatuck and went into business here. Polly was daughter of Mercy Stanton and Prentice Breed, born

1781, and lived here many years. Her uncle, Nathan Stanton, was killed by falling from a haymow in the barn on the farm now owned by Mr. Sanford N. Billings.

The present Wilkinson home was once the William Terrett house, which will be seen by the picture to have the old-fashioned gambrel roof, and stood on Main St. a little north of Capt. Amos Palmer's, and on the old map of the village houses now owned by Dr. Geo. D. Stanton, it is designated as the Terrett house. It was bought by Col. Joseph Smith and moved to Church St. between Main and Water on the north side, where it now stands. The family lived in it for many years till it was finally sold and passed out of the name.



SAMUEL TRUMBULL HOUSE AS IT LOOKED IN 1850.

In 1795 Sammel Trumbull, son of John Trumbull, printer, of Norwich, came to this village and issued the first number of a newspaper entitled "The Journal of the Times." The motto of the paper was "Pliant as reeds where streams of freedom glide, Firm as the hills to stem oppression's tide." He probably built his house soon after coming here, as most of his children were born there, so it was one of the oldest in the Borough, and stood on the southeast corner of Broad Street and Main, on rising ground, fully six feet above the level of the street. In front was a space of fifteen feet, or more, to the edge of the bank, which sloped very sharply to the roadbed on Main Street. The large elm tree was not enclosed. It was a two-story frame

building, with an ell on the east, having a shed roof which sloped almost to the earth, so that anyone standing on the ground could touch the eaves. In the year 1850 it showed no paint, but was just the old wood-color, and had a large, rough, stone chimney in the center, and was a "Relic of ye olden time." The house was taken down about 1860.

Directly east and back of this Trumbull house, stood the old Meeting-house: for years it was there in a pitiful condition, with its sash and windows broken out, its days of usefulness over. It was moved from Putnam's Corners, and put on this lot, presented to the Society by Charles Phelps, Esq., in 1785 or 1786. It was built by a lottery and by subscription, amounting in all to £400. It was a good sized two-story, frame building, and fronted to the west: the space near the front was small, and there were two large boulders but a few feet from the door. It is said that its spire or tower was the mark used as a target during the bombardment, the British thinking it stood in the center of the village, which accounted in a measure for their shot going over and doing so little damage: many shot are even now picked up in the swamps beyond. It was taken down in 1860, and the work of "The White Meeting House" was finished.

The old house standing opposite the Congregational Church belonged to Captain Lodowick Niles, who married Elizabeth Stanton, Nov. 5th, 1797: in February of that same year, he bought land at Long Point of Joshua Swan, with mention of a barn thereon standing, for £100 (now more than \$300), containing about 36 rods. It was bounded by near stones and walls and the southeast corner of Mr. Peter Crary's dwelling house, this being the only mark which might now be known, as the Crarys lived about this section of the town. Again in 1807 Captain Niles purchased another lot of land of Bartholomew Hedding with a dwelling house thereon, among the boundaries of which is mentioned land lately owned by John Jeffords, Robert Palmer, "and the salt water."

He seemed to be a large landholder, for many are the records showing land purchased from various people. In 1809 another deed from Joseph and Nancy Smith of Oxford, Shenango Co., New York, for \$275 sells one-half of an undivided lot of land and half of house, bounded west by Robert Palmer's land, east by Stiles Phelps' land, it being Joseph's and Nancy's share in the estate of Captain Joseph Eells, deceased, the other half belonging to Betsey Eells : and again we find a deed from Jon-



CAPT. LODOWICK NILES HOUSE.

athan Phelps to Captain Niles of land bounded thus : beginning at southeast corner of sd. Niles land, thence east and north by land belonging to the heirs of Jonathan Palmer, north and west by land of Captain Amos Palmer's, west and south by Joseph Smith's land, and south and east by Coddington Billings and Lodowick Niles," this deed being in 1811. This Captain Niles had a daughter Charlotte, who, while attending school at the old Academy was killed by a stroke of lightning, as she was



sitting between her two sisters during a severe thunder tempest. Another daughter, Eliza, married Mr. John F. Trumbull, and came to this old Niles house to live, but she died in a few years, and some time after Mr. Trumbull married the daughter of Joseph Smith, and still remained in this house, which is yet owned by his children.

The Dea. Elnathan Fellows house was situated just across the present railroad track from the old Niles house, and was a quaint-shaped, gambrel-roofed building with an underground room and leanto at the back, built against a little rise of land. It was occupied for years by Dea. Elnathan Fellows, whose carpenter shop was located where the Charles Brewster house



DEACON FELLOWS HOUSE.

stands. His daughter Lydia also lived here, and married first, Mr. Samuel Langworthy, and second, Mr. Samuel B. Chesebrough. Mrs. Lydia was an earnest Christian worker and eloquent in prayer and praise in the house of God. When she died her funeral was held in the old Baptist church, and upon that occasion Mr. George S. Brewster rose to speak in praise of the departed when he suddenly fell back and expired immediately. This old house was taken down some years ago, and a modern one now stands upon its site.

The large, old-fashioned, double house standing on Water Street, with the store of Mr. Frank Trumbull within, is the Josiah Holmes house: the large chimney is in the center, with

the stairs going up against it, as was the custom in these double houses. It received many a scar in the attack of 1814, and there is yet shown a large cannon ball imbedded in the chimney. Jabish Holmes married Lydia Clift of Groton, and left three sons, of whom Jabish, the eldest, married Emmeline ~~Holmes~~ *Williams* -

The old Cobb house stands near the head of the breakwater on Water Street, and remains very much as it was in 1814. It is low, with gambrel roof and the sloping leanto in the rear,

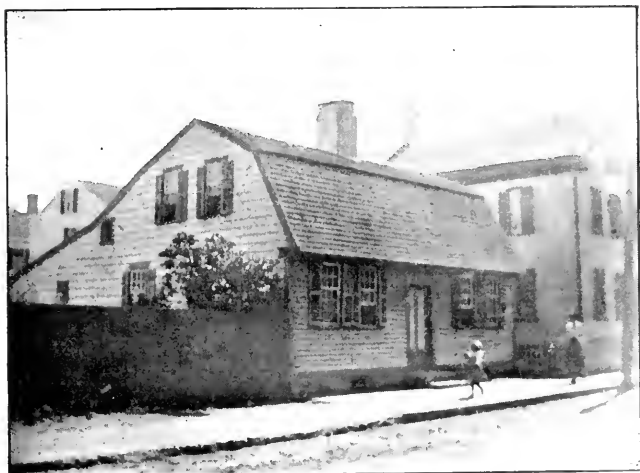


JABISH HOLMES HOUSE.

and was shingled instead of clapboarded. It stood in the thick of the fight near the battery, and so has many scars received during the bombardment. At that time it was owned by Elkanah Cobb, but has long passed out of the family name and possession.

Captain Thomas Swan married Fanny Palmer, daughter of Captain Amos Palmer; she was born July 4th, 1776, and was very proud of the fact. They kept tavern, as it was then called, in a large house on the south side of the town landing for many

years. In a little book entitled "The tour of James Monroe, President, June 28th, 1817," it is recorded as follows by S. Putnam Waldo: "I am indebted to the politeness of George Hubbard, Esq. for this account. The revenue cutter, "Active" came to anchor with the sloop of war, "Enterprise," the Newport and New Haven cutters, about 3.30 P. M. A committee consisting of Messrs. Enoch Burrows, Paul Babcock and George Hubbard were appointed to go out to meet him and in about fifteen minutes after, this committee preceded the barge of



COBB HOUSE.

the Chief Magistrate and his suite, Gen. Swift and Mr. Mason, and attended by Com. Bainbridge and Gen. Miller, under a national salute from the cutter, landed: they were received with acclamations. Col. Randall and the committee, followed by his suite, escorted him through a double row of citizens, uncovered, to Captain Thomas Swan's hotel: a salute was fired from the old eighteen pounder, that sent such terror and dismay to the squadron of Sir Thomas Hardy, on the ever memorable 10th of August, 1814, and a very large concourse of citizens from this and adjoining towns uttered their spontane-

ons welcome by three hearty cheers, which the President reciprocated by coming to the door and bowing right and left. Several volunteers who served at the bombardment were presented and warmly greeted by the President, who congratulated them on their brave resistance. He afterwards visited the Battery or redoubt, then standing and also the arsenal. In the evening the President received the visits of a number of citizens and complimented them for their spirited defence of the town, and seemed much pleased with the town and its people. Upon the morning of the 28th of June, he embarked on his favorite vessel, the *Enterprise* (that has compelled a barbarian Corsair to strike her colors), and left our shores for Rhode Island."

This house was remodelled about 1832 or 1833, owned and occupied as a dwelling house by Gurdon Trumbull, who married the daughter of Capt. Swan. It was during this occupancy that it was burned down. My mother often showed me the room which President Monroe occupied, and the high post bedstead, with its formal hangings, in which he slept, was preserved there until the fire. This house was burned in the large conflagration that destroyed all that part of the town. Mrs. Swan used to love to tell about the attack and of her burying a large crock of June butter (rather than let it fall into the hands of the British) in her asparagus bed, and on her return, looking for it in vain: for she had either forgotten just where she put it, or some one had spirited it away, she never knew exactly which. It was from Capt. Swan that the powder used in his vessel, the "*Halka*," was obtained, when all other ammunition had given out and the guns were about to be spiked: this probably saved the place from destruction, as soon afterwards more was brought from New London.

Mr. H. Clay Trumbull also tells us the following: From a window in this same house I saw President Jackson and Vice President Van Buren pass through the streets of the Borough. When they visited this place, they were coming from the site

of the Old Battery and though only a little chap, I can recall the stately form and bared head of "Old Hickory" as he then appeared. It was later, that Pres. Tyler visited the Borough and took breakfast at the Wadawanuck Hotel and also visited the site of the old Battery. Dr. Geo. E. Palmer, Warden of the Borough, said to him that an appropriation from the Government was greatly desired to repair the Arsenal, and to protect the two 18 pounders, which kept off the British in 1814. At this Pres. Tyler (who was called "Old Veto") said laugh-



JOS. WRIGHT HOUSE.

ingly, as I well remember, "Well, I tell you what I'll do: if Congress will vote you an appropriation, I promise not to veto it."

The Joe Wright house stood just south of the Jabish Holmes house, and was used for tenements for many years, going by the name of "The Yellow Kittens" probably on account of its color. It has now been moved down near the end of the point, where it stands, very much altered from its original shape when Mr. Wright lived in it. He was a sea-faring man, and married Miss Lucy, sister of Peleg Hancox.

On this same street, and near the "Atwood's Works," stands the Capt. William A. Fanning house, where he lived after his marriage with Miss Juliet Palmer, and here their daughter, Mrs. Bradford, lived as a child. Capt. Fanning was a brave man in the war of 1812, and was a sea captain, for in 1819 he was supercargo of the Brig *Hersilia*, on an exploring and sealing voyage, when Capt. Nat. Palmer, his brother-in-law, was mate. Also, in 1820, Capt. Nat. only twenty-eight years old, went from Stonington in a side-masted sealing vessel of only



FANNING HOUSE.

forty-five tons into the Antarctic Ocean seeking new lands. He did discover an island, which is the most northerly point of Antarctica, and which has been named in his honor, "Palmer Land."

Capt. Amos Palmer's house, called in later years the Old Corner House, was built by Amos Palmer, the 5th in descent from Walter, in 1787, on the very spot where the original house which was burned down, stood. It is very large, roomy and old-fashioned with the chimney in the center, like most of the

houses of that day. The chimney as originally built was immense, the foundation of large stones and the rest of Dutch brick, which when taken down, in later years, not only built the three chimneys that took its place, but there was enough left besides to almost pay for the new ones. In the old chimney in both kitchen and the room above, were the large, old-fashioned fire-places, where it seemed as if a cord of wood



CAPT. AMOS PALMER'S HOUSE.

could be put on at once, and the large brick oven and huge crane with its pot-hooks were also there.

A century ago they built the chimney, and then if there was any room left they built the house around it. The huge back-log was often brought in by two men and a horse, and was the last care of the house-wife at night, when she raked carefully together the live coals, placed the live brands against the back-

log, and covered all with ashes to be ready for the morning. On this depended much of the comfort of those days, when the weather was severe, for if the fire went out it was almost a calamity, as then recourse had to be made to the tinder-box, steel and flint, or a messenger sent to the nearest neighbor for a shovel full of live coals. So we see the necessity for carefully securing this all important back-log. Within these large fire-places, were often placed benches for the comfort of the delicate, and the dye tub was also kept where it would not freeze, and on this the old darkey servant would sit, as much at home as anybody. The rooms are all large and have the corner posts covered: the entry was originally small, with the stairs going up against the chimney, turning on themselves, but it was all altered by Dr. George E. Palmer.

In trying to make some alterations in the cellar the corner stone was accidentally knocked out, endangering the whole house, so that it had to be taken down and the vacuum which was left, attracted many onlookers. Standing as high as it does, this house has many marks of the bombardment in 1816; one shell struck the roof and went through to the cellar and was taken out by the fire patrol before it did any more damage. It also went through Grandma Palmer's china closet, where she kept all her precious India china, and what had not been sent away was ground to powder. The ceiling still shows the results, as the plastering never has stayed up properly since.

Captain Amos was sitting in his front door the afternoon of the attack, when a cannon ball struck a stone wall to the south and the stones flew in every direction, breaking out almost all of the window panes on that side, and there are pieces of stone now in several of the panels of the doors, imbedded by the force of the shot that went past the old gentleman, out through the door, the wind of it almost upsetting him, and being spent, fell across the street. When it was cool enough he went over and picked it up, and took it down to the Battery on the Point,



and asked if he might send it back with his compliments to the British, as it had done him a hundred dollars' worth of damage, so they put it in the old eighteen pounder, and let him fire it off; he saw it strike one of the barges and then went home satisfied. Captain Amos was a prominent man of his time, and filled many important offices in the town. He was chairman of the committee of safety, and the letter which he wrote to the Secretary of War was most highly complimented as being so accurate and concise. He had a large family of sons and daughters, and the old house was always noted for its hospitality and good cheer, through the past century.

One of the amusing events which took place in it, in Dr. Palmer's time, was the marriage of an old negro, named Cuff, to one of the house servants. Mr. Gurdon Trumbull, Justice of the Peace, married them, and many of the friends and neighbors of the family were invited to the festivities and to see the fun: by the time Captain Gurdon got through the old darkey did not know whether he was married or what had happened to him: he was so confused between the wit of the Justice and the good cheer offered the guests, and was glad to beat a retreat, followed by his blooming bride. It was an event long spoken of and laughed over by the participants. In the south parlor have been many notable weddings, one of which was quite an affair; that of Captain Charles Phelps to Miss Ann Hammond, a niece of Dr. Geo. E. Palmer; the wedding was a great event for those days, and in after years the bride often pointed with pleasure to the spot where she stood to have the knot tied. Many distinguished persons have been entertained in this old homestead, among others, Major and Mrs. Whistler and their two boys, since so famous as artists (consins of Mr. Donald Stanton, who has so kindly drawn the pen and ink sketches here included), and when Major Whistler went to Russia to build the St. Petersburg and Moscow railroad, he left his family here with Dr. Palmer until he could send for them to join him.

In later days it was the scene of many gay and happy times,

and its old-fashioned tea party in 1857, the first of its kind, is still remembered with pleasure by those who were entertained or took part in it. The whole countryside was ransacked for old-fashioned things, furniture, pictures and spinning wheels: even the supper was composed of all the old-time dishes that are now mostly a thing of the past: some of the guests came on pillions, some in ox-carts with high-backed chairs for seats, and it is safe to say they all had a good time. Stonington was at



COL. OLIVER SMITH HOUSE.

its best in those days, and its many pretty girls is one of its proudest traditions. In one of the grates in this house was burnt the first hard coal brought to this village: it was consigned to Captain Francis Amy, but his chimney hadn't enough draft, or for some reason he could not make it burn, and was so disgusted with it that he sold it to Dr. Palmer, who used it successfully. Dr. Palmer lived here and kept up the family traditions of hospitality and good cheer: he was also one of the

leading physicians, and held many positions of trust in both Borough and town, dying in 1868.

Across the street, and a little above, is the Col. Oliver Smith house, a low, story and a half, with its gambrel roof and dormer windows. It was built by him in the spring of 1761, when he moved here from Groton, Ct., where he was born and lived in the first house which was built there in 1653. Col. Smith was a fine looking man, fully six feet tall. He was a ship builder, and carried on quite an extensive trade with the West Indies. His wife was a descendant of Captain George Denison, and they had a family of sixteen children of whom one was named for George Washington, who used to call upon Col. Smith, and was there soon after the birth of this son. Another son, Edward, who married "King" David Chesebrough's granddaughter, Elizabeth Grant, lived on the corner of Water and Wall streets, about where the Ocean Bank now stands. His son, Alexander, married, and lived in this house of his grandfather's on Main Street, now owned by the Collins family.

Col. Smith owned a few slaves, one of whom was Venture, whose history, printed in 1798 and related by himself, is very interesting, and is in part as follows: he was an African slave, brought into this country at eight years of age, wholly destitute of education, but became the owner of himself and wife and several children. He accumulated considerable property, and was a man of striking ingenuity and good sense. He was born in Guinea, in 1729, his father being Prince of a tribe having three wives, as polygamy was common in that country. Venture was the oldest child, and was named Broteer: his ancestors were very large and strong and measured six feet tall.

On account of his father marrying his third wife without the consent of his first and second, his mother left him, taking her three children with her. Broteer, being five years old, walked by her side, while she carried one on her back and the other in her arms. As long as they travelled they ate of the fruits of the land, and after walking for five days, she left Bro-

teer with a rich farmer, who put him to tending sheep; after being there a year, his father sent for him and brought him home, and soon after their country was invaded by a numerous army of 6000 men, and although they paid great sums of money and gave them many cattle and sheep to leave them in peace, which they had had for many years, the old King had to surrender and the women and children were haltered and led to camp. Then they tortured his father to make him tell where his money was, but he refused, and finally died.

Immediately after, they marched all the prisoners to the sea, and Broteer was made waiter to the leader of the company. On the march they overcame and took possession of every tribe they encountered, until, as they neared the sea, with strength and provision nearly spent, an enemy attacked them, took all prisoners and put them in the castle for market. Soon after the leader took Broteer and several others in a canoe and rowed to a vessel belonging to Rhode Island, commanded by Captain Collingwood, with Thomas Mumford as mate. The steward of the vessel was one Robertson Mumford, who bought Broteer for four gallons of rum and a piece of calico, and called him Venture, on account of his having purchased him with his own private venture: thus he came by his name. All the slaves bought for this vessel's cargo were 260.

They sailed for Barbadoes, and small-pox breaking out, sixty died before they reached port, so they sold all the rest to the planters there, except Venture and three others. These sailed to Rhode Island, and he went to his Master's home on Fisher's Island, where he was employed mostly in the house carding wool and other household duties for four years, and then other and harder tasks were put upon him, all of which he performed faithfully, and his history contains many events of his life there, both interesting and heartrending. After being there thirteen years, and being twenty-two years old, he married Meg, a slave of Mr. Mumford's, and at the close of that year he was sold to Mr. Thomas Stanton, 2nd, who resided in Stonington and who

married Sarah Chesebrough first, and second, Mrs. Sarah Hiliard Fish; thus Venture was separated from his wife and daughter. He had earned considerable money in various ways, and about a year and a half later, Mr. Stanton purchased his wife and child for him at £700 old tenor, but not long after they had a falling out with their mistress, which occasioned so much dissatisfaction that he was sold to Mr. Hempstead Miner of Stonington for £56, who soon decided to sell him; so Venture buried his little hoard of money in the road over which Mr. Stanton passed daily, and Mr. Miner carried him to Hartford and offered him for sale, but finally pawned him for £10 to Mr. Daniel Edwards, who after finding him honest and trusty, as his waiter, furnished him with a horse to return to his wife and children, who were at Mr. Stanton's. They not being pleased to see him, Venture immediately went to Col. Oliver Smith's: Mr. Miner had not settled with Mr. Stanton for him, but had given Col. Smith a bill of sale before his return from Hartford. When these men met to decide which should hold him, as Venture wished to live with Col. Smith, it was agreed that he should, and he took upon himself, the name of Venture Smith. He had always been very anxious to purchase his freedom, so Col. Smith consented and Venture took his little hoard of money out of its hiding-place in the ground and paid it over to him, and by doing extra work (although one quarter of this extra he paid over to Col. Smith), in five years he had earned his freedom money, £71, 2s. which he paid Col. Smith, who then liberated him although it lacked £13, 18s. of the full sum of his redemption. He soon after left Col. Smith's and sold all of his possessions in Stonington and went to Long Island.

Mr. Thomas Stanton still owned his wife and two children, Solomon and Cuff, but Venture purchased them and his oldest child Hannah, also three colored men: with these he had in later years varied experiences of grief and disappointment. At sixty-nine years he was broken down with anxiety and trials, his eye-

sight was impaired so that two of his grandchildren had to lead him about. He had been a wonderfully strong man, standing six feet, one and a half inches in his stockings, and being able to carry a barrel of molasses on his shoulders for two miles. He could lift a tierce of salt holding seven bushels and carry it several rods : also on the Davis farm can be seen the " Venture stone," which was easily carried several yards by him, but which now requires the united effort of two ordinary men to lift. In many respects Venture was a wonderful man. He owned a



CAPT. EDMUND FANNING HOUSE.

house and several acres of land in Stonington. On Long Island he bought a house and two farms. After he went to East Haddam, he worked for Timothy Chapman and Abel Bingham and bought sixteen acres more of land on which he built a house. He owned twenty boats, went fishing, clamming, raised watermelons and in every way acquired property. He was temperate, honest and industrious, and worked more hours in his life than many men who live to be a hundred years old. He was buried at East Haddam, where he died.

On this same Main Street in the village, which was laid out

from Stonington Harbor to the Town of Preston in 1752, a little above Col. Smith's house on the other side of the street, is an old gambrel-roofed house, which has been improved and modernized by its present owner, Mr. Davis, so that the front of the house does not show its age: but passing through the gate and going around to the rear, you see the little leanto with the tall chimney and the sloping roof which easily distinguishes the house of more than a century from the modern one. Here, as nearly as can be told by the oldest inhabitant, Capt. Edmund Fanning lived in this large, old-fashioned, double



DR. LORD'S HALL.

house, with great rooms on either side of the small hallway, the stairs going up against the chimney and turning on themselves. It has the high wooden mantels and the large stone chimney in the center, with its huge ovens. Captain Fanning was a ship builder, and in 1822 built the *Hydraspy* and *Almyra*.

Dr. Lord's Hall was made by Dr. Lord during a great revival when dancing was prohibited by "the powers that were" in order that the young people might have a place where they could trip the light fantastic toe, if they so wished: he tore out the inside of the second story of this house and put in a new spring

floor and fixed it for a hall, the whole length of the building, Mr. Frank B. Noyes's mother often told him she had been there to dancing school, as a girl, with many others of her time. It was used for this purpose for many years until modern ones took its place. The first Stonington Band used to meet here to practice, and to such good effect that its music is yet remembered with pleasure, by those who heard it. The instruments were hung around the walls and when the Episcopalians in 1847 hired it for their first services while the church was being built, they were left hanging as the band left them after their



AUNT MARY HOWE HOUSE.

practice on Saturday nights, and with their gay ribbons they made quite an effective background. This hall, having served its purpose, has since been turned into tenements and much altered from its original shape: it still stands on the corner of Main and Harmony Sts.

Dr. Lord's house was a large, comfortable old house, which stood on the corner of Main and Union Sts., and was long owned and lived in by the Lord family. It was afterwards the home of that loved and honored elder of the Baptist church, Dr. Albert G. Palmer, for many years, and was moved over



on the marsh to make room for the New Baptist Church now standing there. Aunt Mary Howe's house was built by her father, George Howe, who lived and died there: she used to say that he was so long in building it, that part of it was practically never finished: this part was rented for a bakery at one time. This house is one of the few left just as it was built, and is quite a curiosity in its old-time simplicity, with its large old fire-places and high narrow mantels. It is now owned by Mrs. Sarah Noyes, one of her descendants, who thinks very much of it, and will not sell to any one. It is kept in good repair and was used as a village library, after Miss Howe's death, until the handsome Free Library was built in 1899, by Mr. Erskine Phelps and Mr. Samuel D. Babcock on Wadawanuck square. The old library was visited by many strangers, as it was one of the sights of the place, with its granite shaft on the corner surmounted by a bombshell thrown in here at the time of the bombardment. It was erected to the memory of George Fellows, one of the defenders of the town in 1814. These now stand on the Little Park in the center of the Town Square with the two old eighteen-pounders on either side of it, so dear to the hearts of the villagers, for the good they have done.

On the corner of Main and Grand Streets stands the mansion which Col. Joseph Smith built in 1800, a large, finely constructed, square, double-hipped roof house with two lean-tos, one on either side, at the rear. There are three windows on the east side both in the upper and lower rooms, and the woodwork near the eaves, under the jetting is very beautifully carved by hand, and the same work is over each window. The front door is handsomely made, with oblong panels of wood, and a curved piece at the top set in with glass in an iron frame. The brass knocker, handle and latch are always polished like gold, and two long, fluted columns are on either side of the door, while about a foot away on both sides are two similar fluted columns which extend the height of the house: surmounting the whole is a pointed frame work set with little oblong panes of glass,

Within, the rooms are wainscotted, and deep cornices show this house to have been built in a more elegant manner than most houses in 1800.

Here, in 1819, occurred a wedding of much interest, when the oldest daughter, Miss Nancy Smith, married Mr. Alexander G. Smith: the two families were not related, though of the same name. Mr. Smith's home was in the Borough where he was clerk of the Probate Court for several years. He studied law with Judge Coddington Billings and kept a store and had his



COL. JOSEPH SMITH'S HOMESTEAD.

office over the store. He was also very active in defense of Stonington. At their wedding, a large number of invited guests came, sixty being at the house to partake of the wedding supper. The next day a large sail boat was seen coming into the harbor, bringing a band of music: this proved to be Captain Lee and a party of friends from New London, who were on their way to call upon Mr. and Mrs. Smith and bestow the customary congratulations. This happy affair was long remembered in the village: Mrs. Smith lived only a very short while and died at the age of twenty-six.

The large double house standing on Main Street, opposite the Col. Joseph Smith mansion, was built by the sons of Rev. Nathaniel Eells, as he had a large family of children. The two youngest sons were married in 1785 and 1789 and lived here together, in the greatest harmony, using the one long kitchen and one fire-place, while one wife sanded her part of the floor so as to know her limitations. The Rev. Nathaniel came to live with them about 1785 and died here. About fifty years before this, he had been settled at the Road, and about that same time



EELLS HOUSE.

the "Great Awakening" was felt in this region. He was the pastor who invited Rev. Geo. Whitefield to preach at the Center Meeting-house. Later Mr. Eells preached at the Academy every Sunday afternoon, until the Point people petitioned for a church of their own.

Although quite an old man, he went to Boston on the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, to help defend the liberties of his country, and lived to see them assured: his descendants lived here for many years. The house is still owned by the heirs of Mr. Samuel D. Babcock, and occupied by Mr. and

Mrs. Robert Palmer, who are each descendants of Benjamin and Joseph Eells. In the early part of 1800 the house was inhabited by B. F. Babcock and wife, who lived on the north side, while Mr. Enoch Chesebrough and wife lived on the south side till 1819, when Mr. Chesebrough moved up to the Grandison farm house. It is but little changed from the original, having the large rooms on each side, and small entry with stairs making the usual turns and landings: the wooden shutters, the



SAMUEL DENISON HOUSE.

large oven, fire-places and high wooden mantels are the same as of old, while the window sashes and small panes of glass are still to be seen.

Up the hill, from the Col. Smith house is the Samuel Denison homestead, built by the Rev. Hezekiah Woodruff after he was installed in 1789 at the Road Church, which was then called the Mystic meeting-house: but his house was not finished when he left his parish in 1803. Then Mr. Stiles Phelps, son

of Dr. Charles and Hannah Denison Phelps, bought and renovated it in fine style, to suit his ideas. He had been abroad (a rare thing in those days) and was much pleased with the terraced gardens he saw there, so he arranged this ground in terraces as they are now, and made it the finest place in the Borough. He failed in business, however, and about 1811, Mr. Samuel Denison bought the whole place, extending on the south side to the Charles Phelps place (which is the Capt. C. P. Williams house) and north to the east road: the railroad cut through his land on the north, and the Episcopal church stands on the land to the south, where also a street was cut through: on the east the large schoolhouse now stands, and Mr. Eugene Atwood's house which was built by the Rev. Samuel Denison, Secretary of the Board of Missions of the Protestant Episcopal Church of New York, and sold by his heirs to the present owners.

This fine old mansion stands on quite high ground, very nearly as it was 100 years ago, and is much admired for its old-fashioned charm. The large chimney and fire-places, the wooden shutters with the small panes of glass are still there: it also has on the top, around the chimney what used to be called "The Whale Walk," where one could go to watch for the incoming seal and whale ships, and is the only house now in the village which can boast of one, but in Nantucket and other seaports they are very common, though in this case it was only for ornament.

The front entrance was at first on the north side, and the present hall, is where Rev. Hezekiah had his study: in the wall by the stairway are three cupboards where he used to keep his books: the posts of the balustrade are of mahogany, the doors still have the old style brass knobs, and many pieces of beautiful Chippendale furniture are to be found here. Mr. Denison had a large family of children, and five beautiful daughters grew to womanhood and married. It was always noted for its hospitality and social life, and many distinguished people have been entertained here. Sometimes the house was full, even to the attic,

where two large rooms were finely finished off, for the accommodation of those who must necessarily move up, when the influx of guests became great, and the change was hailed with delight, as the view from the third-story windows is very fine, overlooking the waters of Little Narragansett Bay.

The Jonathan Palmer house was built by him originally where Dr. C. E. Brayton's drug store now stands; he was the first postmaster here and collector of the port. It has been moved back of the Zebulon Stanton house where it now stands.



RODMAN HOUSE.

and is a large double house, owned for a long time by the Rodmans, but that family having all moved away, it was sold by them to Mrs. Geo. Rogers of Boston, and is now owned by Dr. Brayton. When it was being moved he found a very large oven in the cellar, as well as two large ones upstairs, and it was supposed to have been built originally for a tavern.

It also had a fine large garden in connection with it, laid out in terraces. It may be interesting in this connection to know that the Stonington Post Office was organized in 1792, and Col. Jonathan Palmer, son of Jonathan and Prudence (Holmes)

Palmer, was the first postmaster, and his commission was from Thomas Pickering, postmaster general. He was also the first collector and surveyor of Stonington, and his commission was signed in 1791 by George Washington as President, and Thomas Jefferson as Secretary, while his commission as naval officer was signed by Matthew Griswold, Governor of Connecticut. He married in 1782, Miss Lucinda Smith, and died in 1810 at the age of 64 years. In April, 1812, his widow sold a tract of land at Long Point to Lodowick Niles, which was bounded by land of Capt. Amos Palmer.



ZEBULON STANTON HOUSE.

The letter in reply to Timothy Pickering is still in the hands of Dr. George D. Stanton and herewith transcribed.

"Stonington, Jan. 22 A. D. 1793. Sir, Your letter of Nov. last inclosing my Commission as Deputy Postmaster at this place with blanks and instructions and a key for mail all came to hand, and were acknowledged in a letter of mine to you the 11th of Dec. last enclosing my bond and Certificates of Office and Oath, also my opinion, which you have pleased to ask, respecting an office in Pawketuck. Have since received no letter or information from you. I opened ye Postoffice agreeably to your instructions on ye 1st day of Jan. inst. and have since had

some difficulty in forwarding the letters and packets directed to other places on acct. of the Mumfords not having received orders from you to call at this office. I conclude there must have been some miscarriage of letters, respecting the business and doubting whether mine to you of ye 11th Dec. has been received. It has caused me a very perplexing anxiety of mind. I therefore request, Sir, that as soon as your business will permit, you will inform me whether my letter above referred to has come to hand and give any further instructions which you now may



ELDER SWAN HOUSE.

judge necessary. I am Sir, with sentiments of esteem, Your friend and very humble servant. Signed Jonathan Palmer.

Still above on Main Street is the Zebulon Stanton house, which was built by him about 1776, or at the time he was married. It faces the Park and has very large beautiful elms before the door, which also testify of age. The house is large, and the ell at the right with its two large show windows full of small panes of glass, was formerly a shop where Mr. Stanton worked at his trade as silversmith. The front entry is small, with the winding staircase and beautifully hand-carved bannisters still to be seen. The house yet belongs to, and is occupied



by, descendants of the Stanton family. On the south-east corner of Wadawanuck Square, which now surrounds the "New Library," once stood a large house called "York's Hotel," kept in 1799 by Joseph Davis, who married Esther Denison; after a few years he removed "Up Country" and was succeeded at the hotel by Mr. Oliver York who kept the tavern.

Elder Swan's house, which used to stand just back of the Congregational Church, is now located on the Westerly road nearly opposite Mr. Ryan's stables, and is altered into a



ELDER ELIHU CHESEBROUGH HOUSE.

double tenement house. It is a large, square building, with shingled sides, and looks very much as it did when Mr. Joshua Swan lived there before 1790, and his son, Elder Jabez Swan, was born there. He, later, became a noted Baptist preacher, and many are the words of wisdom and witticism that are even now attributed to him.

As you drive up the hill on this same street, where so many beautiful houses have been recently built, and towards the Velvet Mill which has lately made its home here, bringing so much of busy life and cheerful faces among us, we see the old home of Elder Elihu Chesebrough, the ell of which is the remaining

part of the Enoch Stanton house which was carried there from the Road in 1800. It is large, square and wood-colored, somewhat worn by age and the elements. The view from the door is well worth the little trip off from the regular drive: the blue waters of the ocean, shining clear in the distance, while Watch Hill and the nearby islands are distinctly seen. Elder Elihu, who lived here, was born in 1769; he was a good man, an ordained minister, and preached in the Baptist Church in the Borough for twenty years, and also at the Anguilla Meeting-



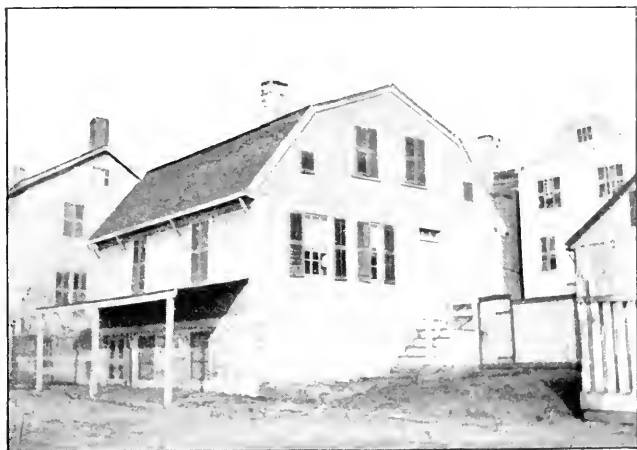
DUDLEY PALMER HOUSE.

house, and continued in his good work, preaching at Wequet-equoc, at the old schoolhouse, when he was nearly eighty years old. He married his second wife (Mrs. Mary Fish, widow of Elisha) at the age of 79 years, and died when he was 99.

The Dudley Palmer house is the original homestead, built by Elijah Palmer in the latter part of 1700. His son Dudley married a Chesebrough and lived here for many years, and the house retains the name of the family who so long occupied it. At this place Rhoda Palmer was born in 1786, and afterwards

became the wife of old Dr. William Hyde. The house is large and double, still in good repair, and bears its weight of years right gracefully. It faces on Elm Street, and is now owned by the Dewey family.

The Billings Burtch house formerly stood where Mr. Peleg Hancox built his fine new house on Water Street, but about 1850 it was moved from there to the corner of Water and High Streets by Mr. Ezra Chesebrough, who purchased it and placed it where it now stands. It was some three feet or more above the road bed, with its yellow front door facing south,



BILLINGS BURTCR HOUSE.

the approach to which was by some rambling stone flags, or slabs, about four or five inches thick, and placed as they were broken out with neither form nor comeliness. At one time the house was tenanted by George Howe, who was sexton and tithing-man at the old Baptist Church, and at another time Mrs. Elias Gallup, sister of Mrs. Ezra Chesebrough, lived there and had a millinery store. According to an old letter found, Mr. Billings Burtch died in this house aged ninety-two years.

The Thomas Burtch house is now standing, as it has for many long years, brown and weather-beaten, but looking sunny

and quaint with its front and side doors but a few feet apart, and the immense stones at all the entrances, as also in the foundation, make it noticeable as an old landmark. Mr. Burtch's son, Capt. Thomas was for a long time a sea-faring man, and later kept a store on the corner opposite the present news office of Mr. George Haley, where the children used to delight to peer into the show windows at the various dolls, toys and the glass jars of bright colored candy sticks, lemon balls, pink and white kisses, and large peppermints to be seen there.



THOMAS BURTCH HOUSE.

Another one of the pretty old houses in the village is the Richard Eldred house, located on the corner of a street known to some as the "Lost corner on the Irish Channel." Its corner door, though looking very like the old "Toll house" doors, is yet one of the modern improvements within a few years. Little is known of its age or occupants, but could the history be told it would undoubtedly be found most interesting. It is remembered by some of the oldest people that long ago Uncle Jimmy Stanton, an Englishman and rope-maker, lived here.



RICHARD ELDRED HOUSE.

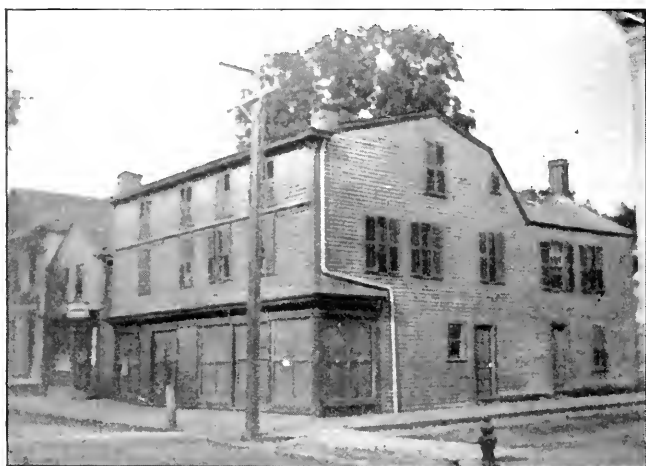
Opposite this at the north, stands the story and a half house which many years ago belonged to a Mr. Fowler, who was a hatter: as he became old and infirm, he wished Mr. Samuel Chesebrough, Jr., to purchase it, which he did, and afterwards his daughter married Mr. George Ashbey, or Neighbor Ashbey,



ASHBEY HOUSE.

as he was familiarly called, and here they lived and died. It is now owned by Mr. August Muller.

Further down on Water Street we come to the large high house built many years ago: for in 1772 Esq. Nat. Miner had his lawyer's office here in the upper story, while Aunt Honor States had a store below, where she sold dry goods, light groceries and fruit. Esquire Miner was a bailiff and quite a terror to the small boys, who, when he appeared, would disperse like dew before the sun, especially if they had congregated with a



NATHANIEL MINER HOUSE.

spirit of mischief or undue hilarity on Fast Day or upon Saturdays at twilight, when all work was supposed to be finished, and the Sabbath begun.

The next house below the cross street is the old Amos Sheffield home, a large two story structure, with two flights of winding stairs, which lead to the front door above. It was built before 1788, and later, his daughter Sally married Enoch S. Chesebrough, and resided there, and Mr. Chesebrough kept a variety store underneath on the north side of the house. Here in the northwest chamber above, Rev. Amos S. Chesebrough,



ACORS SHEFFIELD OR CAPT. BENJ. PENDLETON HOUSE.

now living at New Hartford, first saw the light of day over eighty years ago. Mr. Simon Carew married the widow of Mr. Amos Sheffield, and kept a store underneath on the south side of the same house at the same time.

The house which stood nearly opposite the Peleg Brown mansion was a low, gambrel-roofed house, occupied by Acors



AMOS SHEFFIELD HOUSE.

Sheffield about 1750, whose daughter married Benjamin Pendleton. It was his father who sailed from Stonington in 1810 and was never heard from. Their daughter, Cassandra, married Thomas Swan, and their descendants have resided in this same house till they sold it to Dr. C. O. Main, who removed it and built anew.

The Widow Luke Palmer's house is one of the old landmarks although none of the older residents seem to know when this house was built: still it is known that Mr. Palmer married Sally P. Denison in 1804, and they lived there. She used to board the men connected with building the Stonington Railroad, Mr. Almy, Mr. Matthews and others, about 1835. The house has been so added to and improved that but little of the original can now be seen. It was owned by Mrs. William L. Palmer, and her heirs sold it to Mr. Henry Davis, whose heirs sold it to Miss Emma A. Smith, and in 1901, the Roman Catholic Society purchased it of her. At various times three clergymen have lived here: Rev. M. Willey, first Pastor of Calvary Church; Rev. R. S. Wilson, Pastor of the Baptist Church, and Rev. A. G. Palmer, who was so long the good minister of the Baptist Church.

George Swan married Abigail Randall. He was a son of John Swan, who married Lucy Denison: his son Roswell, who was born at the place now called "The Highland Farm" married Harriet F. Palmer, daughter of Capt. Amos Palmer by his second wife. He studied under Hezekiah Woodruff, pastor of the Congregational Church in Stonington, who fitted him for college, and he entered Yale, graduating in 1802, with a class who subsequently became eminent and distinguished men. He was called to Norwalk, Connecticut, and there died: his widow survived him many years and lived on Main Street in a house since moved, situated just above that of her father, Capt. Amos Palmer. She lived there until the marriage of her daughter Harriet to Nathan F. Dixon, when she went to Westerly, Rhode Island, to live with them.



The Elijah Palmer house stood on the southeast corner of Main and High Streets, and was taken down by the late Moses Pendleton: the ell, which was used as a store and afterwards as a school, was moved to Water Street, near Mr. Oscar Pendleton's store where it still stands, sometimes used as a little store. Elijah was the father of Mrs. William Hyde, Sr., who was two years old when he moved into it. Mr. Gardon Trumbull also lived in this house for a while, and here our esteemed



THE MORRILL HOUSE.

townsman, Rev. H. Clay Trumbull was born, and here also, Mr. Giles Hallam lived for a while.

The Morrill house is now situated near the livery of Mr. Theo. Wilcox and used as tenements, shorn of all its glories of olden days. It was originally one of the finest in the Borough, owned by Capt. Benjamin Morrill, who was a merchant in the West India trade. A large hall ran from front to rear, while the stairs went straight up to the hall above, and had a handsome newel post of mahogany. It stood nearer the water at the time of the great September gale, and part of it was carried away:

the father procured a boat and rescued part of the family while the mother, nurse and baby crawled into the big brick oven to await his return: but before he could get back, they were all swept away, although finally rescued with great difficulty. In one of the large rooms upstairs was a staple in the floor securely fastened, where an insane member of the family was chained, as there were no asylums in those days. The brave Hulda Hall, who stayed so faithfully beside her dying mother, at the time of the battle, lived here the latter part of her life, and it is said that Capt. Fanning also resided here at one time.



CAPT. JESSE BEEBE HOUSE.

The Capt. Jesse Beebe house stands on the corner of High and Gold Streets, an old house, yet no authentic record as to its age can be given. This Capt. Beebe was for many years master of a Packet running from New York to the Borough; he also had charge of "Eel grass shoal" light-boat. The latter part of his life was spent as a Pilot on the old Stonington line of steamers. Capt Joshua Pendleton bought the property and lived here until his death, when the house was sold to the present owners.

The old and ancient looking gambrel-roofed house, standing on Water Street, shows in many ways the marks of age, but it is not definitely known who was the builder. At one time, many years ago, Uncle Jimmy Clark, father of Mrs. George Brewster, kept a bakery here: and later, Capt. John Barnum resided here. Within thirty years it has been raised to the present height and new ovens put in underneath, for a bakery which has been used for many years, by Mr. Isaac N. Fairbrother.



FAIRBROTHER HOUSE.

Dr. Charles Phelps' house which stood on Main Street, was built by him, when he moved down here from the Phelps place, north of the Borough, in the latter part of 1700. This was a fine old mansion, standing back with a lawn reaching to the street. It had a ball room made with a spring floor for dancing, and was a fine specimen of the homes of that date. At the foot of the lawn was a little office, afterwards used by Squire Hubbard, who married Dr. Phelps' widow, and lived in the house until it was moved by Capt. Charles P. Williams into Harmony Street, where it now stands large and

square, even more imposing than the picture represents, but now shorn of all its glory and made into a tenement house. Where it stood formerly, is now the fine residence of Mr. Charles N. Wayland, known as the Capt. Williams place, the main body of which was moved from Water Street, and placed there by Capt. Williams and added to, making a fine appearance from the street. He was also for many years, engaged in the whale and sealing trade, and had many ships on the water: one of them named the "Betsey Williams" was built at the "Kiln Dock" just south of his garden.



PHELPS HOUSE.

The Waldron house, standing now near the "Atwood Machine Works," was built in 1783 by Jonathan Waldron, and was one of the few, at the lower part of the town at the Point. It had always remained in the family until sold about 1886. Mr. Waldron came with his brother, Nathaniel, to Stonington in 1776 from Newport, Rhode Island, where he was a merchant, and had many vessels in those waters at the time the British took possession of that place. Mr. J. C. Waldron of New York says that he built this house after a copy of one in

Newport, and it was the first house built in Stonington, with a good sized hall, and many people came to see it. Also in the dining room is a large "dresser," with sliding glass doors, which formerly stood in the parlor. The house was badly wrecked in the battle of 1814, and there are yet many evidences of broken beams and places where the shot came through the walls. A grape shot made a hole through one of the panes of glass, cutting it perfectly round, as if done with a knife, and without cracking the glass. For many years, this was quite a



THE WALDRON HOUSE.

curiosity, and was always guarded and cared for until it was accidentally broken about 1875. My grandmother felt so badly, she sat down and cried at the loss.

Mr. Jonathan Waldron married Lois Denison: they had several children, of whom George, died in the war of 1812 in the Privateer with Capt. Ben Pendleton. Another son, Jonathan, died in Stonington, and left a legacy for the "Poor of the Boro." The brother Nathaniel married Susan Palmer, sister to Dea. Simeon, and their son Nathaniel, who married in Philadelphia, was the father of the present Waldron family, who

occasionally return to visit in Stonington where their ancestors lived over 125 years ago.

The old windmill and house built in 1774 on the west of the Point and north of the lighthouse, cost £70, which was raised by a company. This was afterwards moved away, as it could not compete with the water power mills. The house stood there till within a few years, with rough stone steps leading up to it and a well by the side of it : when this was torn down, the gambrel-roofed one now standing on the Point, was moved there by Asa Wilcox in 1816. This year was so cold that no vegetables could be raised, for there was a frost every month.

Edward and John Denison, son and grandson of the ship-

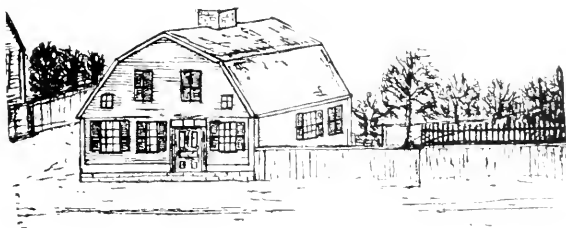


JOHN DENISON HOUSE.

builder George, of Westerly, built the first house in the Borough in 1752, on the Town Square, or Landing, as it was then called. It stood where the Gurdon Pendleton house now stands, and was a tavern for many years. It was built especially for the farmers, who came to sell their stock and produce to those engaged in the West India trade, which was quite profitable at that time, before the Revolution: the amount of their goods was usually returned in rum and molasses. That same year he built the first wharf at the foot of the street and continued the West India trade in which he had been engaged in Pawcatuck. The house was afterwards occupied by Mr. Giles Hallam, and was burnt in the great fire of 1837, the family hardly escaping with their lives. After the fire, one of his descendants

built the house now owned by Mr. Ira Palmer. The view of this house is taken from an old sketch in the possession of Dr. Geo. D. Stanton.

The Capt. Keene house was formerly the Tom Wilcox house built by him: Mr. Wilcox's daughter Fanny married Capt. Keene and they both lived and died there; it was sold a short time ago, and moved over on the marsh, and in its place is the fine store belonging to Burtch and Co., druggists. The Denison Chesebrough house stood on the corner of Union and Main Streets and was formerly occupied by Dr. Nathan Palmer who moved here from Wequetequock and built this new house. It has now been moved to the east part of the Borough.

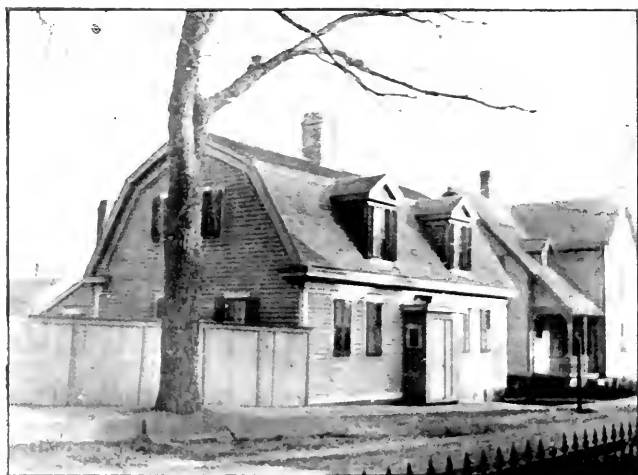


JOSHUA HALEY HOUSE.

Opposite the Howe homestead, stands the house of the late Joshua Haley, much changed from the original gambrel-roofed low house which the older residents remember. Here lived Mrs. Remembrance Miner for many years: she was a Goddard of New London, sister to Mrs. Amos Sheffield: her husband was Nathaniel Miner second. He lived only a short time after their marriage in 1795 and died, leaving two children, Rev. Nathaniel, who went to Salem, and Harriet, who married Peleg Wilbur of Little Compton, R. I. He was lost at sea, and after a time she married the Rev. Mr. Dawes, who also taught school. They left this house for a time, and while away Mr. John Terrett's family lived here. Mrs. Dawes came back and remained here till quite an old lady, when she went to her broth-

er's in Salem and died there, and this house became the property of Mr. Joshua Haley.

Just below the late home of Capt. Joseph Smith stands the low gambrel-roofed house owned in the latter part of 1700, by old Mr. Thomas Ash, who was a ropemaker. His daughter, Miss Selina Ash, kept a school here which was attended by many of the older inhabitants of the Borough. This house was purchased by Mr. Gurdon Trumbull, with the land about it, and was moved from where the Capt. Smith house now



THOMAS ASH HOUSE.

stands, which Mr. Trumbull erected, and where he lived till he moved to Hartford. Mr. Daniel Hobart also lived at the Ash house for a time, and it is now owned by Capt. Thomas Scholfield.

Where the Potter Block now stands was formerly the site of Rev. Ira Hart's large, double house, with its long ell and garden at the west. He built this house soon after he was installed as Pastor of the first church at the Road, in 1809. He had been preaching as supply for four months in North Stonington, just before coming here, and before that had been active in missionary work in Pennsylvania and New York state, and



was always eager in promoting all religious work. During his twenty years stay here, he preached at the Road in the morning, and in the village of Stonington in the afternoon: he baptized 288 people and married 143 couples. He was also Chaplain of Col. Randall's regiment, and was at the bombardment of Stonington in 1814.

The story has been often told of the young Englishman, Thomas Powers, who was killed by one of our crew at that time, and his body brought ashore and buried at the village cemetery. Rev. Mr. Hart preached the customary sermon, which was so affecting that many an eye unused to weep was dimmed by



HART HOMESTEAD.

falling tears. The next year, the father of Mr. Powers came to Stonington, and finding Mr. Hart told him that he had "come expressly to see the spot where his only son had been buried," so Mr. Hart went with him as far as the gate of the cemetery, and waited there while the stranger sought out the grave: we can imagine what deep emotion stirred his heart, and how unrestrained the tears that fell. Today we may visit the same spot and see the monument which was erected to his memory by his fellow officers of "Her Majesty's Ship, Superb," while we drop a tear for this English boy who lies alone among strangers in a foreign land.

Mr. Hart's zealous labors tasked his strength overmuch, and

his health failed him about the time his new meeting-house was built, which was the present one at the Road. He was expecting to preach the sermon, on October 29th, 1829, when the house was dedicated, but on this very day, the pastor who had been untiring in all religious work, lay at death's door, and before the services of the day had begun, he breathed his last, aged 58, having been born in 1771. He married Maria Sherman of New Haven, and his oldest child, Dr. David S. Hart, is remembered by many yet as a wonderful mathematician and a teacher who fitted many of our young men for college in this very house which has been taken down since his death.

## CHAPTER SEVENTH.

“ We may build more splendid habitations,  
Fill our rooms with paintings and with sculptures,  
But we cannot  
Buy with gold the old associations.”

Coming up from the village, leaving several fine residences behind us, and past the “ City of the Dead,” we come to the old home of Dr. Charles Phelps, who came to Stonington from Hebron, Connecticut, and built a house at the foot of Cosadue Hill, which is now in North Stonington. He moved his family here about 1765, and built a house which is the ell of the present fine residence, still belonging in the family and known as the “ Phelps place.” He was a distinguished physician. In Miss Perkins’ book, she describes him “ as a fine, round, full-formed man, very handsome, of courteous manners, dressed in fashionable style, flowing ruffles from his bosom and ruffles over his hands, exceeding fluent, and an agreeable talker.” He was the first Judge of Probate in Stonington in 1767, having for his clerk then Paul Wheeler, and during the thirty-three years which he held this office, he had many other clerks.

He had a large family of children, fifteen in number; his daughter, Hannah, at the age of seventeen, married Judge Andrew Huntington of Norwich, a widower nearly twice her age. Miss Perkins also describes her as a “ young lady possessed of the beauties of mind and person in an eminent degree.” She was of a much more lively nature than her husband and was always a great social favorite from the time, “ when as a jolly, young girl of fourteen,” she sticks her compliments into a letter from Jonathan Bellamy to Aaron Burr, to later days, when she impresses Mrs. Sigourney with that elegance of form and address which

would have been conspicuous at any foreign court : she was especially fascinating to the children who visited her, by her liberal presentations of cake and other pleasant eatables, and her readiness to lend fine books and pictures. Young girls confided to her their joys and sorrows, sure of an appreciative listener. The bill for the wedding finery of Mrs. Andrew Huntington is still preserved and may be interesting at this late date.



DR. CHARLES PHELPS HOUSE.

Charles Phelps, Esq.

To William Hubbard, Dr.

April 1777.

|                                 |     |    |   |
|---------------------------------|-----|----|---|
| To 20 yds. Brocade at 46/6      | 46/ | 10 | 0 |
| “ 8 1/4 yds. Lute string at 21/ | 8   | 13 | 3 |
| “ 7 yds. Blown lace at 9/       | 3   | 3  | 0 |
| “ Do. Thread Lace at 5/4        | 2   | 13 | 4 |
| “ 25 yds. Trimming at 1/6       | 1   | 17 | 6 |
| “ 6 yds. White Ribbon at 3/     | 0   | 18 | 0 |
| “ 1 pair White silk gloves      | 1   |    |   |
|                                 | £64 | 15 | 1 |

Her husband, Judge Huntington, carried on the business of a merchant and Mrs. Sigourney says of him, that he was of plain manners and incorruptible in integrity and the weight of his influence was always given to the best interests of society. He received his title from the office of Judge of Probate which he held for many years.

Dr. Phelps' son, Joseph, married and lived at the Phelps place, while his father after the death of his first wife, moved to Stonington and lived there with his second wife, who was Sally Swan : she survived him and married Mr. George Hubbard in 1809. Mr. Joseph Phelps' oldest son, Charles, who married Miss Ann Hammond of Newport, Rhode Island, lived here, and added the present large front to the house about 1827 and made other improvements. This place has been the scene of many pleasant occasions, one of which was the marriage of Mr. Frank Babcock, brother of Mr. Samuel D. Babcock, to Miss Phebe Swan, who was a cousin of Mr. Phelps, and immediately after the wedding they sailed for Europe.

Mr. Charles Phelps was a very kind friend to the poor and a liberal benefactor, and it was indeed a sorrowful day in Stonington, as well as in his own family, when it was known that he was one of the victims of the steamer "Lexington," which was burned on the night of January 17th, 1840, on her usual trip from New York to Stonington. His nephew, Mr. Charles Noyes, was with him and was also lost. Mr. Phelps left a widow and two children, one of whom, Mrs. Eugene Edwards, has always resided in her father's house, and has also followed in his footsteps in regard to liberality, of which the Road Church has been one of her beneficiaries, as the many gifts which are in the Ladies' Parlors can testify. This house of Mr. Phelps is situated in a most delightful spot, and here Mr. Erskine Phelps, for years a prominent business man of Chicago, a son of Mr. Charles Phelps, and now the present owner, has returned to still further beautify the home of his ancestors, where from the shaded verandah of this mansion he can see the

glistening waters of Lambert's Cove and enjoy much of nature's loveliness.

Further up the road is the old Jesse York house, standing a little back from the highway on the brow of a hill, near the present parsonage of the Road Church. This house was built about 1775 a large, square structure with the usual big stone chimney. It commands a fine view of ocean and country round about, also Watch Hill, the popular summer resort, shows plainly in the distance. Dr. Charles Phelps owned this place



YORK PLACE.

at one time, and Mr. Jesse York bought it after him, and his daughter Nancy married Mr. John W. Hull in 1801, whose son Jesse owned it, and now it belongs to his son, Mr. John W. Hull of Tenafly, New Jersey.

Coming down the driveway again, we cross the road and follow a deep rutted cart path through a gate and into a pasture, where wending our way for some distance beneath the drooping boughs of forest trees, we come to a most picturesque spot, which was once one of the business centers of the town, for

here was the old grist mill, built by Mr. Nathaniel Fellows who married in 1737, Hopestill Holdredge and put up this house and mill here. Mr. Fellows had a family of thirteen children, one of whom, Lydia, married Mr. Nathan Noyes, and their son Nathan used to tell about the mill there, which was run by an immense overshot wheel, that stood nearly as high as the house beside it. A long wooden trough, led from the dam, a few rods north, to the wheel and Mr. Noyes, when a boy, used to run up this flume and open the gate at the dam and then, turning, would race with the water, running the length of the flume, and jumping off before the water caught up with him, which was an hairbreadth escape. Afterwards this mill was sold to Dr. William Lord, who came here from Lyme, and he sold it to Mr. Charles Smith, who also run the grist mill here. The place is now owned by Mr. Sylvia.

Still continuing our way to the west, on this most delightful path, which winds in and out, among the hills and valleys in a most fascinating manner, we come out into the public highway, where turning to the north we drive for a short distance, when, if one delights in a most charming view, let him go through the gate, which leads to Mount Pleasant on the old Indian land, known as Chenango, and here after following the winding path which is constantly ascending, you see a house towering above you, so close to a broad flat rock, that from below it seems to form an immense stone doorstep.

To climb the hill and go upon the piazza, is the work of a few moments, but when it is accomplished, the sight reveals to even the most uninterested observer, one, if not the most beautiful, panorama in the whole town of Stonington. To the north are the dense woods, which are ever varying in their hue and beauty, while at the south lies the village of Stonington, the harbor with its shipping, the many farm and summer houses, and nearer by, the various lower peaks of rock and land, where with no great stretch of imagination, we can see in the near future, more new houses for the city people, who continually

find in our town, that which delights the eye and brings rest to the world weary ones.

This farm was originally Hallam land and later passed into the hands of Mr. Amos Denison, who built the house: after him, Mr. Eugene Edwards and wife, with Mr. James Noyes owned it, of whom Mr. Francis Noyes purchased it for his parents, who lived there with him till their death. It was then a one story half house with the large chimney, deep oven and high mantel so common in those days. Since then it has



MOUNT PLEASANT.

been enlarged and was occupied by Mr. Francis Noyes and his family till about 1870 when he sold it, and it is now in the possession of Mr. Denison Palmer.

But a short distance north of Mount Pleasant, stood the first Haley house in town, and an old well now marks the spot near the site of the old home. John Haley, who married Priscilla Fellows, sister of Lydia, built his house on the bridle path, which runs from the Fellows Mill to Dr. Gray's house, and not far from there it stood, facing the south, a gambrel-roof, half



house, with the old stone chimney at the end: now only the cellar and a few apple trees mark the spot of this old homestead. Below here but a short distance, was also the old Zebulon Chesebrough house which was low, with sloping roof in the rear. It was occupied afterwards by their son Ezra, who was a Major in the Eighth Regiment at one time: here he lived until his death in 1878. The path can now be traced through these woods, past where these old houses once stood, and is a most delightful one in summer, leading to what is now known as



CRARY HOUSE.

Sylvia's Mills, about which are most beautiful places for picnics in summer, and the pond affords a grand skating place in winter.

There are numerous Wheeler families in Stonington, who can claim Thomas Wheeler of Lynn Mass., as their ancestor. He came here with his wife Mary in 1667, and their graves are found now in the "White Hall" cemetery. Though his will was destroyed at the burning of New London, we know he owned land, which extended on either side of the road from the late Robert Wheeler's house in North Stonington to the "Town

Farm" here, with the exception of the Hyde and Billings places, which were owned by the Stantons and Miners. His homestead was built in 1673, on the very site of Col. James F. Brown's house. It was a double, two story, wood-colored house, very low between joints and was taken down seventy years ago.

The large, square, white house near the roadside, a short distance below, was built and owned in 1748 by Nathan Crary, a descendant of Peter Crary of Groton. When he died Mr.



SAMUEL WHEELER HOUSE.

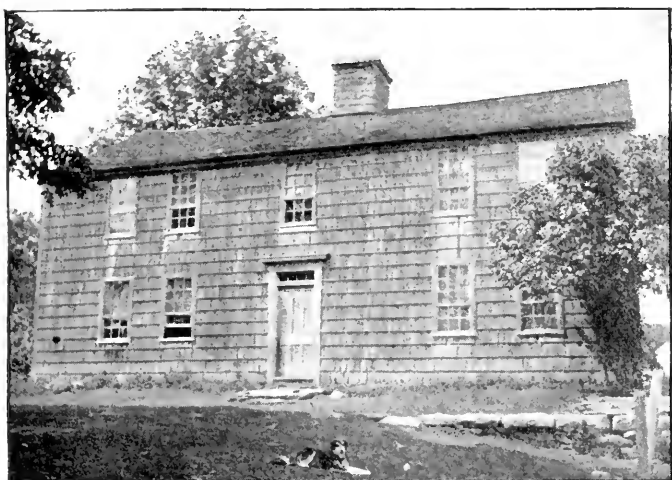
Latham Hull bought it and his son Amos, lived here. Later his half brother, Col. John W. Hull owned and sold it to Mr. Benjamin Hewitt, who after occupying it for a few years sold it to Mr. Burrows Park. At the time when it was occupied by Mr. Crary and family, they owned a number of slaves, among whom was one called Jinny, whose Bible, brown and worn, under date of 1784, is still in existence, belonging to Richard A. Wheeler. She was emancipated a few years later and when Mr. Crary died, she went to the home of Mr. Lester Wheeler, where she remained till her death.

Another Wheeler house stands in excellent condition, but a short distance south of this, which was built by Mr. Joseph Wheeler, near the close of the Revolutionary war and while he was in battle at "White Plains," New York, where he was discharged and came home to occupy it. At that time it was a one story half house, the east side being built then and the west part added later. When it was owned and occupied by their son Samuel and his family about 1840, the house was raised another story. The white oak tree in front, was then but about six or eight inches in diameter, but now the house stands under the shadow of this grand old tree which has become the largest oak tree in the whole town, the circumference being about fourteen feet. This house is now more than a hundred and twenty-five years old. It is occupied by the fourth generation of that same family in direct descent and owned by Mr. Nelson Wheeler.

Driving down the pleasant, shady road a few rods, past another Wheeler house of a later date, on the east side of the road we come to the spot where once stood the Joseph Denison house. This Mr. Denison was son of George and Mercy (Gorham) Denison, who lived at Westerly, Rhode Island. This was a large two story house and after two or three generations of Denisons had occupied it, Mr. Latham Hull Sr. bought it and gave it in his will to his son Jeremiah, who lived there: it was sold by his children to Samuel and Jonathan Wheeler, who rented it to various families, among them Mr. Nathaniel Noyes, Mr. Dudley D. Wheeler and Mr. Orsemus Smith, who was a blacksmith and his old shop still stands a little east of the present house of Mr. Joseph Wheeler, where he wrought in all kinds of iron work: beside shoeing oxen and horses he made hoes, scythes, pitchforks, and steel traps for catching otters and beavers. He was an ingenious mechanic and worked at all kinds of smithery. Joseph Denison's son, Dea. Joseph, had a sugar mill until during the Revolutionary War, on his farm (the present Moss place) which was operated by horse

power, where sweet cornstalks were ground and the juice boiled down for molasses and sugar, as it was almost impossible to buy any, because of the British blockade.

A short distance off the road, at the right from this old house long since gone, stood, till a few years ago, the house of Mr. Elisha Williams, though later owned by Mr. Prentice Wheeler. Mr. Williams built it in 1740 and married Thankful Denison for his first wife: she lived but a very short time, and he married second, Eunice Williams, third Esther Wheeler, and fourth



ELISHA WILLIAMS HOUSE.

Mrs. Eunice Spalding Baldwin. His daughter Eunice, by his third wife, Esther Wheeler, was a young lady who had many admirers and she also possessed a mind and will of her own, probably inherited from her father as the following story will show. He was very desirous of seeing her united in marriage, to a man of his choice, which was evidently contrary to her own desire, as she had previously become acquainted with Mr. Isaac Denison and had come to the conclusion, in her own mind, that he and no other should become her liege lord. One day her father desired her to be at home to his friend and suitor, and

that she should be, he locked her into her room on the second floor and went away feeling sure that when he desired her presence he should know where to find her, but "Love laughs at locks" and when Mr. Williams went to bring his daughter to meet his desired son-in-law, she had flown, having jumped from the window and fled through the woods to the home of her uncle Richard Wheeler, where she safely remained for a time, till her father's wrath was appeased. After a while Mr. Denison's claims were established and they were married in 1773 when she was only eighteen years old.

Later this place was made quite famous by the making of counterfeit money; three men, who lived one here, another at the Hull farm and the other at the present Hyde farm, became acquainted with a Frenchman who understood the art of counterfeiting silver money, so they commenced operations here. The die which they used was long afterward found in a barn, some distance from here, where it had been hidden in the hay. it was about a foot long, and three inches wide and had places for cutting quarters, halves and whole silver dollars. The first quantity of this money which they used, was sent to the West Indies to purchase different articles, which came safely to hand and so they again ventured and taking their money they all went to Coventry, in Tolland County, where they purchased cattle with it.

They had bought quite a number and had started for home: when getting as far as Hebron they put up at a Tavern over night. The next morning, two of the men started for home, leaving the other to settle the bills, but he became so provoked at the inn keeper for charging such high rates for board and lodging of themselves and stock, that after much discussion, he threw the silver money, with some violence, upon the counter, when one piece rolled off and struck upon the stone hearth, breaking into three pieces, which showed the tavern keeper that he was taking bad coin and when the man turned and fled, they were convinced that he was knowingly guilty. Before they

reached home all three were overtaken and arrested, brought back to Hebron and bound over for trial, and nine hundred dollar bonds were given for each to appear in court at Hartford; they were finally released by a friend, who gave bonds for them, which they afterwards paid.

A short distance below this Williams house, used to stand the house occupied by Aunt Zerviah Holmes, who was the nurse at all the homes round about and whose kindly, beaming face was always a welcome guest. She was a wonderful



LESTER WHEELER HOME.

woman, left at an early age in life, a widow with children, and almost entirely dependent upon her own exertions, she succeeded in rearing her family, all of whom have been a credit to her in their career through life. She is yet living with her son in Stonington and has recently celebrated her 97th birthday. The small, low house in which she lived was reached by several steps leading down to it, and when you entered, a world of wonder and delight seemed to open to the childish heart, for everything was there in abundance to form a real home.

It was built by David Lester, who married Priscilla Wil-

liams on land belonging to her, and they came there to live in 1718: afterwards their only child Priscilla Lester married Jonathan Wheeler, and their eldest son Lester Wheeler married in 1774, when he was seventeen years old and built the present one story house in 1773, which stands at the roadside with the sloping lawn, protected by its white fence. It has been rebuilt within the last forty years, but the underground room is still there which was formerly a weave shop, and after a time old black Jimmie, previously owned by the Crarys, had her home in



GEO. CULVER HOUSE.

this room. Aunt Jinny used to carry "harbs" about among the neighbors and prescribe for the sick.

Just at the southwest of here, was at one time a cooper's shop where casks and barrels were made. This Mr. Lester Wheeler, was the greatest mathematician of his day about here and many were the intricate problems, which came to him, by the hand of Mr. David S. Hart, who was a private teacher in the Borough, and these Mr. Wheeler solved to the amazement and delight of the students of that age. Mr. Wheeler married Eunice Bailey and their son David married and lived here, whose son William

lived and died here, leaving the place to his widow and children, the present owners.

Mr. Lester Wheeler had a son William, who married Wealthy Turner, sister of Aunt Hannah, the noted school-mistress of a century ago. He built the story and a half, wood-colored house in 1800, which still stands on the corner near, upon a little hill, partly hidden by pine trees, but yet they do not obscure the view of the surrounding country. Here have lived many families: Mr. Jeremiah Shaw, Avery Wheeler, Clark



WHEELER SCHOOLHOUSE, OLDEST IN TOWN.

N. Whitford and Jonathan Chesebrough who sold it to Mr. William F. Wheeler, of whom it was purchased by Mr. George Culver, the present owner, a few years ago. When this house was raised, the scholars at the schoolhouse a little farther to the east, which was built in 1799, were dismissed by the teacher, Miss Mary, daughter of Mr. Warham Williams, that they might go to the "Raising," for in those days it was considered a great event to raise a house.

The interior of this schoolhouse, has remained the same as it was when it was built, till within the last ten years, when mod-



ern chairs were placed therein. How vivid it all returns to mind, the old, high desks with heavy planks for seats, while in front of these was the low, plank seat for the little children, the teacher's heavy desk, with lid that opened and lifted up, sometimes hiding the teacher's face for a moment, much to the delight of the children. The old box stove in the center of the room, set in its wooden frame filled with ashes, the long pipe, held in place with wires, the water pail with its always rusted tin dipper, set on the low seat near the door that opened into the entry, where in the north end the wood used to be piled so high, that at recess the children who were especially daring and mischievous, would climb up on the wood and go overhead, where in the darkness, still as a mouse, they would hide away, till summoned down peremptorily, by the teacher on penalty of a severe whipping, if they ever ventured there again. Here have taught Aunt Hannah Turner, Miss Hannah Fairfield, Aunt Lucy Stanton (and she was the first to teach drawing and painting), Mr. John Hallam, Capt. Samuel Helms (who taught the big boys navigation), Mr. Chester Prentice, and later, many young men of promise, William Palmer, Cyrus Noyes, James Burnett and Ralph Wheeler.

Among the scholars were found Nat Gallup, of Albany, Charles Stanton and brothers, Elam and William Wheeler, Alfred Clark, Richard A. Wheeler, Hiram Shaw and many another. In those early times, the ministers visited the schools. There was Rev. Ira Hart and Mr. Whittlesey, who came on their annual visits and later on Mr. Simon Carew, Mr. Billings Davis and also one of these very children, Richard A. Wheeler, grown up, though only in his twenty-first year, was appointed the school visitor. Still later we see Hon. William Williams, one of the founders of the Norwich Free Academy, who always left the little tract or testament for the children, and when Elder Griswold came the big boys were wicked enough to imitate him, when his back was turned, by using the broomstick for a crutch and going about the room limping, in a manner to re-

seemble the good old man who was lame and used a crutch for support. Still the old schoolhouse stands there and little children pass to and fro, recite their lessons and play their games as in the long ago. Of late years it is sometimes closed for a term or so because of the scarcity of children in the district, where in other days were gathered forty or fifty, and so full was the house that the teacher could hardly get around the stove.

The following poem which so vividly describes them was printed in the "Democratic Review" in 1846.

#### THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE.

It stands by the wayside beneath an old tree,  
Where I frolicked in childhood, light-hearted and free.  
'Tis rude and timeworn, and the weather stained door  
Is carved with deep crosses and marked o'er and o'er,  
With drawings and names by childish hands traced,—  
Here, a part of a man, with the head quite effaced,  
But with shape and proportion ne'er intended by nature,  
The body a child's, but a giant in stature.  
The half open door to my view has disclosed  
The benches and desks still standing in rows,  
All duly notched, where some idle boy sat,  
And worn smooth where his elbows rubbed, this way and that.  
The desk of the master, his inkstand and rule,  
Where he set all the copies while he eyed the whole school.  
On the desk close beside, where the ferule is laid,  
Confiscated apples and tops are displayed ;  
Unchanged do they seem, and still standing there,  
Are the pail and tin cup, and the master's arm chair ;  
And still in the center, all eaten with rust,  
The old stove and its pipe, thickly covered with dust,  
On the three legs is resting, the fourth broke and gone,  
Is supplied by a brick for its weight to rest on ;  
The papers and ashes lie scattered about,  
The bits of old pens with the feathers notched out,  
The marks on the wall, the ink on the floor,

E'en the smoke on the ceiling's the same as of yore,  
Hark ! the voice of the child, thro' the half open door,  
Who cons, in faint treble, his dull lesson o'er,  
And the other, who yawns with his arms o'er his head,  
And sighs as he wishes his lesson was said :  
Still deeper and longer, and more weary his sighs,  
When he turns to the window his sleepy grey eyes,  
And sees in the field the lambs skipping at play,  
And envies their freedom this sweet summer day,  
And believes in his heart that happy he'd be,  
If he like the lambs, could only be free  
To gambol and frolic, to stand or to run,  
To lie down on the bank and bask in the sun :  
But oh ! this high bench, where his little short legs  
Hang dangling, benumbed and lifeless as pegs,  
While vainly he tries to reach with his toes  
The too distant floor. Oh ! these are the woes  
Which many a child in his school hour knows.

North of this schoolhouse, where now underbrush and timber are growing profusely, was once several Indian wigwams, still remembered by the oldest inhabitants. In one lived Barbary Woggs, an Indian woman who wove baskets, from the twigs, saplings, splinters, or flexile willows of which there was then, an abundance about here : after being shaped by hand they were put in the sunshine to dry and perfect the shape. Here the old broad stone doorstep still remains to mark the place of this, the last of the Indian dwellings about here.

Turning at the corner, near the late residence of Mr. Warren Wheeler, and about a half mile to the east, on a prominence called Walnut Hill, where the view is hardly to be excelled, we find a few feet back of the present new house, the place where an old house stood, which was once owned and occupied by John Wheeler's family. Mr. Wheeler who married Zerviah Fanning in 1727, built this house and lived here, and having no son, he gave the place at his death to his nephew, John

Wheeler, who married Mary Miner, and his son John married Ann Borodel Denison who lived at the old Denison house in Mystic. Their daughter, Nancy, married Mr. Russell Williams and lived at Old Mystic, from where their daughters married and went to other homes. One of the sons, Elias Wheeler, went south, where his descendants are yet living.

Just a short distance below, where till recently has been a gate to a private way and quite near the old turnpike was an old house, built by Jonathan Wheeler: the old stepping stones



HYDE PLACE.

now show where they used to come to the brook for water. Mr. Wheeler gave it to his son Joshua (who married Molly Turner), during his life and after him, to his son Joshua (the hunter), who never married, but built the present house standing just below on the new road lately opened, called Wheeler Avenue.

The Amariah Stanton house and ell now known as the Hyde Place was erected in 1750, and during the year 1796, the main body of this house was removed, and the present frontal was built by Judge Coddington Billings, sufficiently far away to

place the old schoolhouse, built in 1767, between the old ell and new house as it is now seen. The old schoolhouse originally stood upon the Hyde farm, quite a distance to the west of this house, and in 1780, the father of the late Governor Morgan of New York was the teacher there. When the new school system superceded in 1795, the building was removed and became part of this house. This farm has passed from Stantons to Hulls and Billings, and then to Gen. William Williams, who left it to his daughter, afterwards Mrs. William Hyde Jr., who rented



PAUL WHEELER HOMESTEAD.

it for years till it was recently purchased by Mr. Henry M. Palmer.

A little east on the corner which turns to go to the village of North Stonington, is the finely preserved house, built by Esq. Paul Wheeler in 1750. He was given his title from being one of the Committee of Safety at home to furnish fuel and clothing for the army during the Revolutionary war. The house scarcely looks its age, standing beautifully located, upon a knoll and is reached by a long flight of stone steps, from which height it commands a grand view of land and water. After

Esq. Paul's death in 1787, his son Paul lived here for several years, and then Mr. Isaac Williams bought it, and his descendants have owned and lived in it for more than a hundred years. Here used to occur officers' drills, when Col. Joseph Mason, a descendant of Major John, commanded. Here Col. William Randall, Esq. Joseph Noyes and Mr. Stephen Avery married their wives, who were all great-grandchildren of the brave Susannah Eastman, who married John Swan in 1699.

They lived in Haverhill, Massachusetts, and she had lost her first husband, Thomas Wood, and child, Susannah, who were killed by the Indians a few years before, and again her house was attacked by them, but they determined that they would save their lives and their children's also: so they placed themselves against the narrow door, but the Indians rushed upon it, and Mr. Swan, seeing resistance was useless, told his wife that it would be better to let them in, but this courageous woman nothing daunted and fired with superhuman strength from the remembrance of the sorrow they had occasioned her before, seized her bake spit (which was a long sharpened rod of iron, used to pierce meat when roasting before the fire) and as the first Indian shoved himself through the door, she collected all her strength and drove it through the body of the man, which frightened them so that the rest turned and fled; thus by her courage and determination, she saved her family from a bloody grave. They soon after moved to Stonington and settled on Swan Town Hill, now North Stonington, where she lived to be a hundred years old. This old Wheeler house is now in the Williams family, being occupied by the granddaughters of Mr. Isaac Williams.

A short distance east of the Perez Wheeler house, stood a hundred years ago, an old, half one story house. Here Perez Wheeler and Desire Randall began housekeeping, on the farm given to him by his uncle, Cyrus Wheeler, who died unmarried. They lived here till 1796 when they built the present house, one story, double, the east side being finished at once for them

to occupy and his mother and children lived in the other half as she was a widow. Afterwards their son Nathan raised it and made it the fine dwelling which is still owned by the family to the fifth generation.

On the highway, but a little way below the Esq. Paul Wheeler house, used to stand the combined house and variety shop of Isaac Wheeler and his wife, Madam Mary Shepard, on land



PEREZ WHEELER HOUSE.

given him by his grandfather, Thomas the first. This house was built in 1680; it was two stories on the south and one on the north, with show windows on the west. She was the first shop or store keeper in town and bought the products of the neighboring farms, which she marketed in Boston and the West Indies, exchanging them for articles for the planters here. She rode alone on horseback to Boston, where she bought her

dry goods and her house was not only the delight of the neighboring families, but her store became a political center. She accumulated much property for those days and was considered very rich, and at her death was the wealthiest woman in the county.

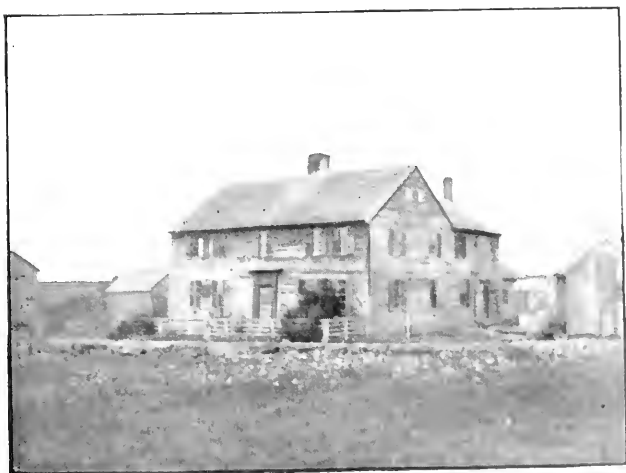
The only mark now left of this once prosperous home is a short piece of double faced wall on the east side of the highway, nearly opposite the present residence of Miss Mary Wheeler, their great-great-great-grandchild. Isaac and Mary Wheeler had but two children, Margaret and Thomas. Margaret married Samuel Frink, son of the emigrant John, and a few rods below her parents' house, they built, in 1714, the famous Frink tavern on land given them by her parents. The site is now known by what is called the old Frink garden, a small lot near the roadside, just south of Miss Caroline Wheeler's home. The tavern was a large two-story, double house painted red, with a projecting roof at the front, having its arched ceiling lathed and plastered. The front door was in the middle of the house, with a large room on either side of the chimney. It was a rendezvous for military training, which in those days was an event of much importance, bringing together, besides the regular company and officers, a large number of people to witness the military tactics, and to enjoy the good cheer always on hand at a training.

I quote from Mr. Benjamin Fish, the following: "Before Post offices were established, letters were addressed 'To be left at the Frink Tavern.'" There the Williams, Wheelers, Denisons, Stantons and Noyes were often to be encountered talking over the business and politics of the day. Although the temperance crusade had not then begun, there was little if any over indulgence by these sturdy and substantial citizens, and the old Sazetac and fragrant St. Croix furnished at the tavern, were unblended, pure and undefiled. It has even been imagined that the grapevines, which have taken root in this abandoned cellar, where these liquors were once stored, have



imbibed some of the old flavor of the soil, and that it can be recognized in their fruit, a delicious white grape. The following lines were placed over the mantelpiece in Frink's Tavern.

“ Our life is nothing but a winter's day,  
Some only break their fast and so away,  
Others stay to dinner and depart full fed.  
The deepest age but sups and goes to bed.  
He most in debt who lingers out the day,  
Who dies betimes has less and less to pay.”



MAJ. GEN. WILLIAM WILLIAMS HOUSE.

Between here and the next Wheeler house, still stands the old red house, built by Samuel Miner in 1739. Some years afterwards Gen. William Williams bought this place and lived here with his family, but later on he bought land of Mr. Charles Phelps and built the present house occupied by Mr. Theodore Palmer. In his will, he left the Miner farm to his son Calvin, whose brother's widow, Mrs. Gen. Wm. Williams of Norwich, afterwards purchased and gave it to the Williams Memorial Institute of New London (a High School for girls, which she founded in memory of her only son, who died in early man-

hood). This old house has been inhabited by very many different families during all these 160 years that it has been rented. At one time to Thomas Randall and later to Denison Stewart. Now it is owned by Mr. Arthur G. Wheeler, who has recently purchased it.

One of the oldest Miner houses in town belonged to Ephriam, who married Hannah, daughter of the first Capt. James Avery, who built it and lived here in 1666. It was situated about halfway between the red house and Mr. Sanford Billings' resi-



CLEMENT MINER HOUSE.

dence, where now is an orchard, in the northwest corner of which stood this two-story half house, with pointed roof, which faced to the south. Here lived the ancestors of Rear Admiral Stanton of the United States Navy.

Where Mr. Sanford Billings now lives, was once the home of Joseph Miner, brother of Ephriam, who married Mary Avery, sister of Hannah, in 1668. They had large families of children and both fathers served in King Philip's war, and were buried in the old Miner burying ground at Taugwauk. After him, his son lived here, who married Capt. Joseph Saxton's daughter

Mary, and their son Clement married Abigail, daughter of Joshua Hempstead, Sept. 1st, 1731, and here her father came with the Rev. George Whitefield and stayed the night before he preached under the tree at the Center Farm, July 19, 1747.

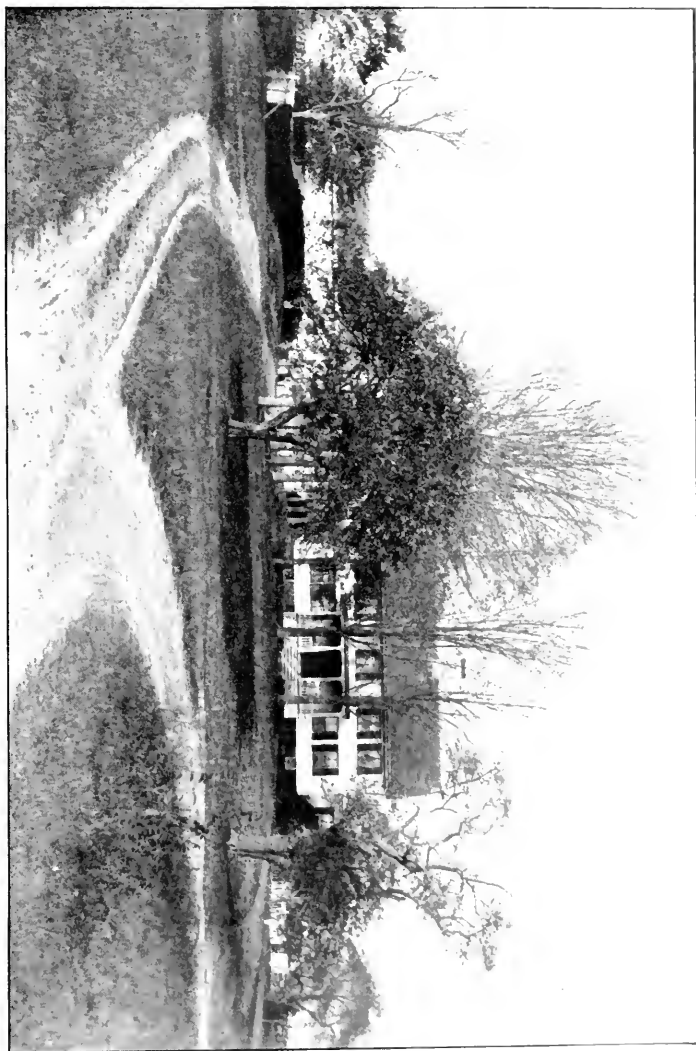
This old house had been burned a short time before on April 18th, 1747, and Hempstead's Diary says that on June 10th, same year, "Son Miner raised his house and about 200 people were there," and on Oct. 24th, 1748, Mr. Hempstead records that he was at son Clement Miner's, placing his Middletown large stepstone before his front door. A hundred years later Mr. Rufus Wheeler was living in this new house, and his widow married Judge Coddington Billings, whose son, Hon. William Billings, took down the then old house, being careful to retain the frame-work of the east room, the front hall with its hand-made balustrade and a portion of the old roof, which had been one of the deep sloping ones at the north, and a portion of this is still to be seen on this side over the outside door. These he built about and made the present new residence, with the many commodious farm buildings, which he later gave to his cousin, the present occupant.

Across the lots, at the west from here, on a new road which has but recently been laid out, stands a house, ancient, yet so renovated within a score of years, that one scarcely realizes that it was built in 1735, and was once a pest house, like many others in town at that day. At one time forty-five men were quarantined here, not being allowed to go further away from the house than the alarm lot (called so because in 1781, when Arnold attacked New London the men belonging to the household were at work in this field). These quarantined men were vaccinated for the small pox and during the four weeks that they were obliged to stay here they organized a military company and had regular drills every day. Dr. Grey attended them and upon reaching the place, would go into the crib and change his clothes, before entering the house, where he diagnosed the patient's condition. None were so sick, but that

every good day they could all go out of doors, and when the time came to go away, great was the rejoicing, that now they were free to come in contact with the real smallpox, and yet be safe from its dreaded results.

This house was originally built as a half, two-story, gambrelled roof, but enlarged in 1787 by adding the west side; the huge chimney in the center fills a space at the base sixteen feet square (just as large as the great east room) and four feet square at the roof. Among the timbers constituting the frame of the house are two white oak plates, upon which rests the rafters, that are forty-four feet long and eight inches square; some of them are still in position and sound, and since it was renovated about twenty-five years ago, it bids fair to endure for another century. The Judge (Richard A. Wheeler) whose home it is and has always been, and to whose ancestors the farm has belonged for over two hundred years, is a great lover of history and genealogy. He enjoys a good story, whether told to him, or by him, and is good company for young or old. He was High Sheriff for twelve years, and Judge of Probate for twenty-three years, has written 653 wills, none of which have ever been set aside. He has also published the history of the church and town, with genealogies of the early settlers. He has served acceptably in many public positions of trust, and helped to make peace in all conditions in which he has been placed.

He renovated this house, put in new windows and entirely made over the great room. The old kitchen was made into a dining room, and the cheese room and long entries, with the half door at the west and the heavy oaken door at the north, with their strong wooden latches, where the string was always out, have all been removed. The large rooms upstairs were plastered and large figures in red and green were painted on the walls with border at the top, of the same figures: the ground work of one chamber was white and the other yellow. At the foot of the stairs in the front hall was also painted a



HOME OF JUDGE RICHARD A. WHEELER.

life size portrait of a girl, with her low-necked dress and dainty slipper peeping out from the short and narrow skirt. Her hair was done in little curls about her face, which although supposed to be painted as an artistic picture, still it is said to resemble one of the family.

In our mind's eye we see that kitchen of long ago, with its wide fireplace and stone hearth, where resting comfortably on the high iron andirons are the eight feet logs, sending up their shower of sparks and roaring flame. On the iron crane, hanging across, are the pot hooks, from which is suspended various messes in pots and kettles, while before the fire rests the baker full of toothsome viands. The brick oven at the left, now storing the household canned sweetmeats, then held the deep iron dish of brown bread, and on Saturday, the skillet of baked beans and pork, the pies of mince, pumpkin and apple, which could all be baked at one time, after the oven was heated to a sufficient degree by red hot coals. In the summer time the fireplace would allow a person to sit in it in a comfortable chair, and when games of blind man's buff were played, the older ones would gather in its spacious precinct, while the children scampered about the roomy old kitchen, which is long enough for a modern hotel, being 13 feet by 27.

From the plastering were many hooks from which hung apples threaded on a stout string, pork and beef hams, various seeds done up in packages, and ears of corn which when well dried would prove a pleasure during the winter evenings, when over the bright red coals, the kernels would pop out into crisp white mouthfuls. On the round, uncovered wooden table, are two tallow candles in their iron candlesticks, with the snuffers on the tray beside them, the pan of Rhode Island Greenings, Chesebrough and Prentice russets, Jilly flowers, Spicings and Denison reddings apples, with the pitcher of sweet cider and dish of walnuts and butternuts. all these were companions in that hospitable room of long ago.

On one side of the table was the great spinning wheel, and on

the other side, the little linen wheel, for making the family garments was then, as now, a matter of time and strength, from the first sowing of the flax seed by hand in May, when it was scattered broadcast over the ground, until two and a half feet was the full growth in September, when it was pulled up by hand and gathered into small bundles, taken to the barn and when thoroughly cured and dried, they were separated into smaller ones and the seed was whipped out and pressed for linseed oil, while some was used to feed quails for trapping, also enough was saved for seed another year, these bundles were opened and spread on dry ground, and kept till about the middle of October, when the stalks would be dry and easily broken. Then it was broken up and bound anew, in little bundles, and was put in the barn for the winter, and by a machine called a Brake it was swingled, betcheled and put through a series of setchels (a board filled with long sharp, steel needles) which removed the swingle tow (or stalk) leaving the linen fibre prepared for spinning on the little linen wheel, which was used for the thread and the finer articles of clothing. The tow was spun on the large, woolen wheel and made the coarser goods. Now the process is nearly forgotten and garments made of homespun cloth are carefully preserved, and the wheels are gone except where they have been kept as heirlooms and now occupy a place of honor in the hall or library.

As early as 1760, the cellar of this house was the weave shop where the loom used to stand, to weave carpets or cloth: tanning leather was also engaged in, using vats made of chestnut logs, dug out and embedded in the ground near Stoney Brook; here was also a weaver's shop, where apprentices were received at an early age and regularly indentured, by written contract, to learn the trade, and at twenty-one their "time was up" and they departed, taking with them the knowledge of the business, a suit of new clothes throughout, and a good horse which was always given them, for their service during the time. Many a youth and maiden have gone from here to other fields of

usefulness and their descendants have returned to visit in this house and look around from garret to cellar, where their ancestor lived so many years before, while one of these preached in the Road Church a few years ago.

One of the mothers in this household, long ago, held somewhat decided views in favor of fore-ordination, a doctrine which was much discussed in early times. One day, seated at her work, she heard a knock at the door and upon opening it found a niece of hers, who was a widow: she thought her countenance looked rather troubled and after ordinary greeting had been exchanged, she enquired to know what was the matter. "Well," responded she, "Aunt Polly, I have had an offer of marriage from a certain widower," naming him, and after telling her all the circumstances, she asked, "What shall I do?" "Well," said Aunt Polly, "have you given this man any encouragement?" "No," was the quick reply. "Well then, Harriet, as you have children and he has also, and neither of you have any too much of this world's goods, I would advise you not to accept his offer." Receiving no reply, she glanced up into Harriet's face and saw there a look of disappointment. At last she spoke. "Aunt Polly, I thought you believed in fore-ordination?" "Well, I do somewhat," was the answer. "Well then, I believe it was fore-ordained that I am to marry this man and I should like to know how I can get rid of it?" The conclusion of the whole matter was, that Harriet accepted the widower's offer and lived happy ever after. Also in this house once lived a maiden whose name was Esther Wheeler: she was engaged to marry Daniel Stanton, who lived not far from her home. During the Revolutionary War he had enlisted and gone to sea on the Privateer, *Minerva*, which had captured the British merchant ship, *Hannah*, and among his share of the prize was a beautiful brocaded silk dress, which on his return, he presented to his affianced as a wedding gift, for they were expecting to be married within a short time. He had been home but a few days, filled with joy and hope for their future happiness, when the call came for



battle at Groton Heights, which he responded to at once, feeling that duty called and he must obey. What could have been the feelings of this young girl, only eighteen years old, when on the morning after the battle at Fort Griswold, his lifeless body and that of his brother, Enoch, who was killed at the same time and place, was brought to his father's house, from where they were carried and placed in one grave, in the Stan-



THE JONATHAN WHEELER HOMESTEAD.

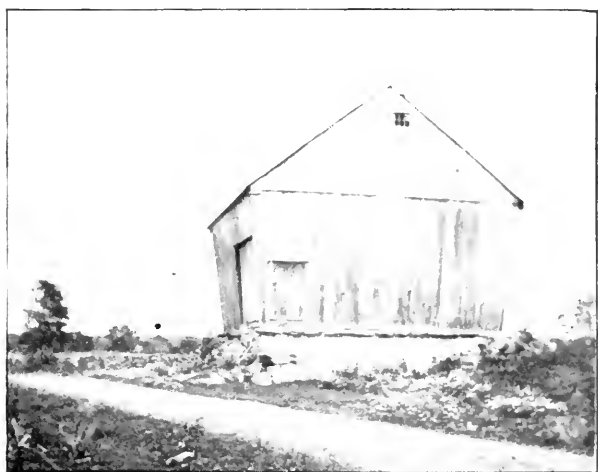
ton family burying ground. The funeral was an event long remembered in this locality and attended by an immense crowd of people. These two young men, twenty-six and thirty-six years old left, the one a widow with seven children, while the other was mourned by a promised bride. When their father, who was over sixty years old, looked upon their silent bodies lying in their coffins, side by side, in the very room in which they were born, he exclaimed, "Father in Heaven! This is a

fearful sacrifice to make for liberty and my country, but it is cheerfully given."

The next Wheeler house now owned and occupied by J. Duane Wheeler, stands one half mile to the south and this farm has been in this Wheeler family since 1687 and for seven generations, the name of Jonathan has succeeded itself. The east half of the house was built about 1720, by Isaac Wheeler, for his nephew Jonathan, with the child's money, as his father Richard had died when he was only four years old, after which he went to live with this uncle Isaac, whose wife, Madam Mary, kept the store near the Frink Tavern. He was taught this business and the cooper's trade, and later built for himself a store and shop a little southeast of this present house, where now can be seen the hollow in the ground, where it stood. In the shop he made casks, butter firkins, keelers (to put milk into), barrels and hogsheads. He sold his goods to his aunt Mary Wheeler for use in her store and to Mr. John Denison, who built the first house at Stonington village in 1752, just east of the present National Bank, where he also kept a store.

This Wheeler house was enlarged later by adding the west half and still later other improvements and additions were made. The woodwork in the east rooms, above and below, clearly show that for the early days in which it was built it was of much finer style than the ordinary house. The cornice, wainscoting and the hand work about the fire-place in the upper chamber, are scarcely excelled in any ancient house in town. The son Jonathan Wheeler, who married Priscilla Lester, was a man of unusual strength: he could easily lift and drink from a full barrel. In those days, trials of physical strength were among the excitements of the times, and men tested their strength one against another. A man from Rhode Island who was noted for his great powers of muscle and sinew came to Mr. Wheeler's to measure his strength against him, but when Mr. Wheeler politely invited him to drink from a full barrel which he easily lifted for his guest, the man departed rather hurriedly.

All through Taugwonk, the high barn is well known, which is the very oldest barn in town. It was built a little east of the Jonathan Wheeler house about 1730, by him, for a wheat barn, and stands upon a stone foundation, over a ledge, which was blown out, leaving an underground room with a southern exposure, where sheep and lambs find agreeable shelter from the winds and storms of winter. During the summer months in those early times, when the barn was empty, a school was kept here by Master Niles. Quiltings were also held



HIGH BARN.

there and Esther Denison, wife of Jonathan, had a large petticoat quilted there, which was preserved for many years, and finally divided among her great-great-grandchildren. It was of dark brown stuff made from homespun cloth, dyed and woven by hand, and quilted in patterns of trees with squirrels perched among their branches, and many another garment whose history is not told, no doubt found its way from these quilting frames in this old building to the owner's home. Ah! many a story of youth and maiden's school days could be recorded were these brown hard beams and rafters able to impart the

knowledge once stored within them, but alas! we go our way none the wiser except as our imagination may unfold for us a dreamy, fairy tale of bygone times.

Adown the road at the east where the two old gates used to swing so close together, as almost to hit each other (when there were also seven others on the way between there and the Road Meeting-house) and only a short distance below here on the south side of the road, used to stand a shop, over the bubbling spring which still gurgles cheerfully under the road and through



CLARK DAVIS HOUSE.

the wall, where potash and saltpeter were made and where, during the Revolutionary War, gunpowder was also made. The old ruins of the cellar of this shop, can yet be traced. Up this hill and still up another, called Cherry Hill, is a house built long ago by a Mr. Randall, who afterwards moved with his family into the west, as New York State was then called. It was at one time occupied by the Eldredges, as here Mary Eldredge was brought up, who afterward married Daniel Stanton, one of the heroes of Groton Heights.

Later it was owned by Mr. Clarke Davis, the son of Elder

Joseph Davis of Hopkinton, who married Comfort Langworthy in 1745. Mr. Davis' brother Joseph married Esther Denison, whose daughter Lucretia was very fond of this place and frequently visited here, and being in delicate health, she used to roam about over the farm : in a secluded spot, shaded by trees, she chose her last resting-place : she died not long after at the age of thirty years, and here now can be found her gravestone with this epitaph :

“ Farewell, Lucretia, lovely maid, adieu.

Our bleeding hearts consign thee to the tomb,

In this lone spot, your choice, reserved for you,

Deep shrouded in its solitary gloom.”

When this house was owned by Mr. Clarke Davis's son Joseph, the center chimney was removed and chimneys at either end of the house were built, which now distinguishes it from its neighbors. The broad hall through the center bears evidence of the size of the old chimney and the deep cornice and handsome corner cupboard, with carving and coloring in the upper part representing the rising sun. The deep window seats and summer beams visible, are facts not to be gainsaid that this is one of the early houses. This place has passed from one family to another for many years, till now it rests in the Wheeler name, as does much more of the land along this road for some distance, and with many little children playing about this old house, now well improved, it bids fair to remain in the Wheeler name for a century more.

Down the hill and past the “ Jeremy Lot,” beyond the school-house, once stood the “ Old schoolhouse,” situated on the rise of ground opposite the present house. Here went to school some of this generation. There was also an old house occupied by Mr. Elisha Wheeler, which stood near the road where now the barn is, and east of here, but a short distance, was where the first Frink lived in town, he was also the first carpenter. Still below, where the balm gilead and poplar trees used to stand, a long row in all their solitary stateliness, set out by Mr. Wood-

bridge, and which served as a rendezvous for crow bill black birds, once stood a house east of them which was occupied by Mr. John Shaw, who operated the fulling mill, that was situated quite a little distance west of the road on Stoney Brook, and it is now more than a hundred years since it went out of use.

## CHAPTER EIGHTH.

“The smith a mighty man is he, with large and sinewy hands,  
And the muscles of his brawny arms are strong as iron bands,  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge  
With measured beat and slow,  
Week in, week out, from morn till night  
You can hear his bellows blow.”

The Putman Corners, where the beautiful old elm tree, called the Whitefield Tree yet stands, was once a busy scene, when the old blacksmith shop stood there on one corner, by the willow trees. Where the present house is, was then a gambrelled roof store, with hall in the upper story. Here school was kept, and opposite here stood the Center Meeting House. This was originally Miner land, and later it belonged to Mr. William Woodbridge, who sold it to Mr. Charles Phelps, and so it has passed on to different owners until this also is in the Wheeler name. The old house which used to stand on the farm was east of the present one, about half way between here and Mr. Frank Smith's. The old cellar can yet be seen and many of the older inhabitants remember that it was a two-story, double house with slanting roof. Here lived Mr. Oliver Babcock and family, parents of Mr. Stephen and Nathan Babcock of Westerville. This was the Col. Joseph Champlin homestead farm of 100 acres, purchased by him of Joseph Miner for 500 Spanish milled dollars in 1765.

A little further south still stands the Jedediah Putnam house, though in a dilapidated condition. It is a half two-story house, and was once occupied by a family who bore this historic name, by which it has since been known, although it was built by the Thompsons. Mr. William Thompson lived first, where

Mr. Eugene Palmer now resides (and his mother was Hannah, granddaughter of Elder William Brewster of the *Mayflower*). Here was a large, double house with slanting roof in the rear, and the front roof projected with a deep cornice or jetting, arched over the front part of the house and plastered underneath.



FULNAM HOUSE.

It was afterwards occupied by Major Alden Palmer and family until the present one was built on its site. The blacksmith shop at the Corner was built by Mr. Thompson's sons, of whom two were smithys, and three were carpenters.

The old wood-colored house, with long, sloping roof to the



east, which stood on the brow of the hill at Taugwank, known as the "Yellow House Farm," has been pulled down within a few years and replaced by the present new one. It was an old landmark, having been built in the early years of 1700 by Walter Palmer, who also kept a store on the north side of the house in the small room next the road, which was entered by a door on the east side, near the north end. This was later closed and replaced by a window, having but four panes of glass. On the north side near the entrance was the old stone horse-block, where travellers mounted and dismounted, and on the same side was a large shop window, which opened up and out, making a counter, where customers could be served as they



JOSEPH SMITH HOUSE.

rode past. There were no trees about this old homestead, but a large elderberry bush stood between the windows on the east side and grew in spite of the numerous small stones which almost paved the ground for some feet about it.

Walter Palmer was grandson of the first Walter, and also grandson of Capt. George Denison, whose daughter Ann, had married Dea. Gershom Palmer; he was baptized at the Road Church June first, 1685, and married Grace Vose of Milton, Massachusetts, when he was 28 years old: fifteen years later he died and his widow was appointed administratrix on his estate, the inventory of which amounted to £1352 in housing and lands. Some of the lots west of the house, are yet remem-

bered as being called "The Walter Palmer land." Since then this farm has passed through many hands, viz.: Zebediah Mix, carpenter, whose deed from Elihu Chesebrough is dated 1748; later in 1768, Oliver Smith is the owner: after him, George Irish of Newport and to him, in 1791, Elisha Denison of New London paid £2320 for its purchase: the farm was then improved by Noyes Palmer who married Sarah, daughter of Zebediah Mix, and in 1810 Mr. Denison sold it to Esquire Joseph Noyes for \$13,555.00.

Mr. Noyes had lived with his first wife at the Paul Wheeler house and for a few years in the old house at the "Highland Farm," which stood some distance east of the present one, where she died in 1806, when four years later he bought the "Yellow House Farm" and remained there till 1819, when he moved to the Elisha Denison house which stood a short distance to the east and lived in the old, two-story front, house with deep roof at the north. In the meantime Mr. Noyes rented his home farm to his sons Joseph and Thomas, but after a few years Mr. Denison sold his land to Mr. Clark Davis, and Mr. Noyes moved back to his own place and his sons went away to other farms. He remained at this place till he exchanged farms with Captain Charles Smith, for the house and land now owned by his grandson, Charles S. Noyes. Captain Smith rented this farm and many families have made their home here for a time, among them being Mr. Dimond, Charles S. Hewitt, Latham Miner, Charles H. Main, William York, Charles Babcock and others, some of whom will yet remember the old house with its vine-covered front and strong half door at the rear, where the roof came down so low as to be easily reached by those passing through.

The land on the north side of the road, recently purchased by Mr. Fernando Wheeler and Frank Smith is mentioned in a deed of Mr. George Irish, as being "the southeast corner of Col. Joseph Champlin's homestead farm, where a narrow lane leads from said post road to said Irish's Tangwank pasture," and near

here at the right, is the old Miner burying ground. Could the events of importance, which have occurred in the lives of all the families, sheltered under this old roof-tree, in these past two hundred years be recorded, it would indeed be a most interesting history of itself. Here have begun many happy married lives. At Christmas time, in 1800, John Noyes and Elizabeth Chesebrough were married, while the month before, Adam States and Fanny Chesebrough joined heart and hand, and here they all came and began housekeeping together. In 1818 Joseph



COL. AMOS CHESEBROUGH HOMESTEAD.

Noyes and Grace Denison came here to live, and two years later his brother Thomas Noyes and her sister Eunice Denison joined them and for a time they dwelt here together. Fifty years later came Joseph Smith and bride, Susan Brown, and made their home on this farm which was given to him by his father, Captain Charles Smith, and it is now owned and occupied by his family.

Following the romantic path, a little below the Putnam house, we find one of the oldest houses in town, which for six generations has been in the Chesebrough name and is now

owned by Mr. Gideon P. Chesebrough. It was built by Col. Amos Chesebrough about 1729, and is yet fairly well preserved. It is shingled on the west side and in various ways shows the marks of age. Mr. Chesebrough was a wealthy man for those days and owned a great amount of land west of this house. A long line of maple trees are before the door, and through the branches, glimpses can be seen of the waters of Fisher's Island Sound, Watch Hill, and nearby islands.

Col. Amos's father, Samuel Chesebrough, lived as a young man with his father, Nathaniel, opposite the Phelps place. He married Priscilla Alden, granddaughter of the historic Priscilla and John Alden of whom history in 1620 says "John Alden was hired for a cooper, at South Hampton, England, when the ship victuled, and being a hopeful young man was much desired, but left to his own liking to go or stay, when he came here, but he stayed and married here." Of Priscilla, we find that "Mr. Molines and his wife, his son and his servant, died the first winter, only his daughter Priscilla survived, and married with John Alden, who are both living and have eleven children." The home of this later Priscilla, who married Mr. Samuel Chesebrough in 1699, was a few rods farther south on the east side of the road below Col. Amos's house, where now can be seen a clump of shrubbery and a slight hollow in the ground.

This Priscilla had a somewhat romantic story as well as her grandmother, for it is told of her coming from Roxbury, Massachusetts, riding upon a pillion behind her future husband (whom she married the following winter), and helping to hold his broken arm in position, which accident had occurred to Mr. Chesebrough at her father's house while he was there upon a business trip (selling cattle for the farmers of Stonington). Here he had been detained, not unwillingly as we may believe, and been well cared for, until it was thought safe for him to start on his homeward trip, and Priscilla was easily persuaded to accompany him and care for the wounded

arm, but ostensibly to visit her sister Elizabeth, who lived in Stonington, only a few miles from Mr. Chesebrough's, on the southern slope of Merrick's Hill. She had married John Seabury, who was grandfather of the Right Rev. Samuel Seabury, the first Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and the one who first brought from Scotland into America the Apostolic Succession, November 14th, 1784. His name is honored in St. Paul's church in Rome, Italy, by one of the eleven double windows which was placed there to his memory. The following story is told of this Samuel and Priscilla Chesebrough's daughter, who had a romance as well as her mother and great-grandmother.

On an autumn evening one hundred years ago, a party was given in Lower Egypt, and among others who participated in the pleasure of the occasion was Miss Chesebrough, who had been brought by a gentleman living near her home at Putnam's Corners. In those days all young ladies owned a pillion, for there was no other mode of conveyance except by horseback, and the pillion could be easily fastened to the saddle. In this way went our young lady to this party, but after they reached there, where were assembled a goodly number of young people, she was introduced to a gentleman from North Stonington, who was very prepossessing in appearance, and he was much pleased with Miss Chesebrough, and asked to have the pleasure of carrying her home from the party, but she told him that as she came with Mr. Palmer and her pillion was on his horse, it would not look well for her to take it off, but he eagerly enquired to know, if she would go with him, if he would take it off, to which she consented, and when at the close of the evening's entertainment, as he was changing the pillion to his own saddle, the gentleman who had brought her came out, and seeing what was being done, demanded to know the cause of the change, when the North Stonington gentleman responded, that he had permission from the young lady herself and should carry her home: after a few hot words they agreed to

meet the next day at Oxacosett Bridge and decide it in a fist-a-cuff manner, which they did and after a short fight the North Stonington gentleman triumphed and won the day, and later won the young lady.

The Miner Noyes house, so called, which stands near the new house of Mr. Amos Chesebrough, was early the property of the Slacks, who owned a large tract of land and lived in the old Slack house on the road from Stonington village to Westerly, which has been taken down within the last fifty years. Capt.



MINER NOYES HOUSE.

William Slack married Lucy Breed and owned this place, which he rented to various families. Here lived at one time, Mr. Jonathan Phelps and his family, the son of Dr. Charles Phelps, and later, Mr. Nathaniel Miner Noyes married Mary Slack and came here to live, and this place has been in the family name ever since. It is peculiarly shaped, and called the salt box house from being formed like the ancient salt boxes which were made to hang in the kitchens of all country houses long ago. It is the only one now standing in town, a half

house, two stories in front and one in the rear, the long roof sloping down to the top of the very windows and doors in the first story.

At some distance east of Col. Amos Chesebrough's, on one of the old county roads, is the large double house with long ell, known as the Squire Joseph Noyes place, standing on the summit of a high hill, from which is obtained a grand view, hardly excelled in all the town, of the ocean, near-by villages, Watch Hill, numerous islands and the surrounding country. This



SQUIRE JOSEPH NOYES HOUSE.

house was erected by Mr. Naboth Chesebrough in 1782, who married Phebe Palmer in 1775: he was brother of William and son of Elihu Chesebrough. Sometime after, Mr. Nathan Stanton purchased this place, and his son Samuel, who married Col. Giles Russell's daughter, lived here, and their daughter married Denison Noyes, who sold it to Mr. Charles Smith, and he exchanged it with Squire Joseph Noyes (brother to Denison) for the yellow house farm, so called, where recently Mr. Joseph

Smith lived. Mr. Noyes was obliged to sell this place as he had to pay a note that became due, for quite a sum of money, which he lost by signing a note for a friend, so he came here to live, and his son Joseph and family joined him later, and it is still the property of their son, Mr. Charles S. Noyes. Under the hill at the east, is the old Plantation Brook, winding among the trees and bushes, and sparkling amid the pebbles and stones which lie in its shallow bottom. A memory of the place within the last forty years, written by a friend, who was often a guest, seems worthy a place here :

“I spent one day of my vacation at this old Noyes home, where so many happy days of my boyhood were passed, and I wanted my children to see it. I had visited it once or twice during the past years and wanted to go again, so one beautiful day, we drove over. It doesn't look now as it did then, kept spotless by the busy hands and scrupulous neatness of those former housewives, but the view from that point is charming. I did not realize that as much, when a boy. I had not the time to go to the old plantation brook, where one day, you remember, a merry party waded in its clear waters. The small boys that were with me, were too little to trudge about as their father used, feeding the sheep, carrying the salt for them and munching dry, brown-bread crusts on the way. Those crusts were from the west pantry in the ell, and I knew also where the pans of milk were set, as I was fond of cream and sometimes helped myself, much to the disarrangement of the plans for butter making, I am afraid, but they were all very kind to me and patient, more so than I am now, I fear, when my boys get into mischief.”

A little to the south is the Ephraim Williams place, standing back from the public road, and is reached through a driveway, bordered by a long line of fan-topped elms of a half century's growth. This mansion house with its large square roof, sloping down at the north, and broad east side, having three windows in the upper and lower stories, presents to the



casual observer more than an ordinary appearance. As you stand upon the broad stone step, your view outward is of the ocean and surrounding country, which is very pleasant, yet the longing to enter will surpass, and as the great door swings hospitably open, it will disclose to your gaze the little hall and the balustrade which is quite elaborate and hand made, while the stairs with their six turns, carry you to the third story, which can be seen from the hall below. Large, square, sunshiny rooms are on either side, showing the summer



EPHRAIM WILLIAMS PLACE.

beams and deep cornice. If you enter at the east side door, you will find an ideal old country lean-to with a half door at either end, the rafters showing overhead and the bare brown floor beneath your feet.

This farm was formerly owned by Mr. Elihu Chesebrough, who married in 1740, Esther Dennis. He probably built this house about that time, and his son William afterwards lived here and married Esther Williams, and here their children were born. The daughter, Eunice Chesebrough, later married Joseph

Noyes, and finally came to live at the house a little to the north, where her uncle Naboth then lived, who had bought the land and house in 1782 of Thomas Chesebrough of Preston, having inherited it from his brother Capt. Jonathan (the husband of Naboth's sister Esther). About 1782, Mr. William Chesebrough moved to North Stonington, having exchanged his farm here with his wife's brother, Mr. Ephraim Williams, who lived at the old Williams' place, north of Colonel James F. Brown's. Mr. Williams had married Sarah Potter in 1781, but she died in a few years, and later he married Hepsibeth Phelps, and while living here his oldest son, Ephraim, was born in 1791. He soon after moved to Wequetequock and there his son, Capt. Charles, was born, but this old place has remained in the Williams name all down the years, passing from father to son, and still is owned by one of the family, Mr. Charles P. Williams, though having been in the hands of tenants for over a hundred years.

On the Flats below, near the old home of Rev. James Noyes, a Baptist church was built in the first half of 1800, called the Anguilla Meeting-house, and the building is still standing, though now used as a barn. Quite recently on land south of this church, has been found, in plowing the ground, a number of silver Pine Tree shillings, dated 1652, and now worth their weight in gold: some of them are larger than others and the edges of all are uneven, having been made by hand. The very earliest coins had only N. E. on one side and XII-VI-II on the other, but in 1652 the General Court ordered "that all pieces of money should have a double ring with this inscription, 'Massachusetts and a tree in the center and New England and the year of our Lord on the other.' "

The tree on some of the coins is an oak shrub, on others a pine or a willow. The variations of the coins are the only means of fixing the date of issue, as all bear the same date, 1652. To whom this money, which has been found on Dea. Erastus Miner's land, belonged, or for what reason it was buried or perhaps lost,

is, and will probably always remain a mystery, for at the time when this money was in circulation, the land here was a forest, as it was but a short time after the town was settled.

A few rods east, we find a low, old-style, gambrel-roof house snugly ensconced upon quite an elevation and looking down benignly upon the passers-by. This house was built by James Noyes about the middle of 1700. He was son of Capt. Thomas Noyes, and this place had descended from father to son through three generations, till Mr. Jesse Noyes gave a portion of



JAMES NOYES HOUSE.

it to his niece, who married Mr. Paul Noyes, and they resided here, so it has been in the Noyes name for 150 years. On the little knoll in front of this house, in the spring of 1838, was assembled the 6th Company, 8th Regiment, 3rd Brigade of Connecticut Militia, for their annual training. The officers of this Company were Capt. Richard A. Wheeler, Lieut. Amos Chesebrough and Ensign Ezra Wheeler. The musicians of this company were John Vincent, who played the key-bugle, John D. Wheeler, clarinet, George Frink, fife, Dudley Davis, the snare drum, and Albert Vincent, the bass drum.

After the usual drill in the morning was over and dinners eaten, which were served by Mr. Gilbert Collins, who was then living there, the company, according to previous arrangement, marched down into this field made historic by the finding of the Pine Tree shillings, and stood in extended line, with swords sheathed and guns reversed, to await the coming, and to pay tribute to the funeral cortege of mourning friends, who followed the body of Miss Abby Helms, a young lady who had been known to nearly all in the company. When the long



CAPT. THOMAS NOYES MANSION.

procession crossed Anguilla Bridge and drew near, the musicians, lifting their instruments began to play, and as the clear notes of the key-bugle and clarinet, the scream of the fife and the heavy roll of the snare and bass drums, blended in the mournful strains of the "Dead March in Saul" scarcely a dry eye was seen among this company of Connecticut Militia.

Mr. James Noyes' father, Capt. Thomas Noyes, lived just beyond, at what is now known as the Col. Peleg Noyes (or the Hoxie Noyes) house. Capt. Noyes built this house after his

marriage in 1705 to Elizabeth, daughter of Gov. Peleg Sanford and granddaughter of Gov. William Coddington of Rhode Island. He and his son James were Colonial officers. Capt. Thomas was a man possessed of considerable property and he it was, who sent to England and had the Noyes Coat of Arms cut upon a stone and placed over the grave of his father, our first minister, Rev. James Noyes, who lies buried at Wequetoock. This house which he built is set back from the road some little distance and impresses one with a grand hospitable air. It is large, square, unpainted, with a hip or quail trap roof, truly in style a mansion house. The broad front door has the old-fashioned iron ring for the knocker, with the small panes of glass over the top. From the front hall below, the stairs can be seen winding away into the upper story and again winding on into the garret.

The great east room seventeen feet square, has the old-fashioned corner cupboard, where now can be found very beautiful and ancient crockery, not belonging to the Noyes family but to those of the present occupants. The west side of this room is ceiled from top to floor, the width of some of the boards are beyond belief unless they are seen. The kitchen has the old style dresser for crockery and the summer beams show in all the rooms. Ah! could this house speak, what a history it would give of Revolutionary heroes, of whom Col. Peleg was one, being Captain at Fort Griswold in 1777. What stories of love and war, heartaches and sorrows borne patiently and of lives lived out in their fulness and gone on into the unlimited beyond where all shall be satisfied. This place has long remained in the Noyes name from the time of Capt. Thomas, to the present, when it now belongs to the daughter of Mr. George and Mrs. Martha Noyes, Mrs. Orson Rogers.

Dea. John Noyes, brother of Capt. Thomas, built the house near Westerly, now known as the Moss house, in 1714. Dea. John's second wife was great-granddaughter of Gov. William Bradford, second Governor of Plymouth Colony. This house

is large with a square roof, and spacious rooms are on both floors. It has no cellar underneath, being built upon a ledge, though the cellar stairs go down from the front hall and end upon a flat rock. This farm was included in the grant of land from the State of Connecticut to Thomas Stanton, the Interpreter General of New England, and by his will it was given to his son-in-law, Rev. James Noyes, and from him to his son, Dea.



THE OLD HOME OF THE NOYES FAMILIES

Moan, a Noyes son, Joseph Noyes, who lived and died there; then to Nathaniel Palmer, and from him it descended to his son Luke, who lived here.

At that time there were two race courses, 50 rods long, on the farm, where hundreds of people used to assemble to witness the races often held there. Still later Mr. Jesse Moss owned and renovated the house so that it is now in good repair and looks as if it would remain habitable a century more.

Some of the land about the house has been sold, within the last few years, so that now the farm is reduced in size, but the new and commodious houses which have sprung up all about here, show that many homes have taken the place where used to be but one, which at the time that this house was built was without neighbors. Mr. Moss was interested in making the land upon this place beautiful to the eye, as well as productive, and the broad and beautiful fields lying before the door will probably soon find a dividing line between them, where now the acres



SAMUEL STANTON HOUSE.

are without fence or wall, or even a stone upon their smooth surface. Mr. Moss was a great benefactor to the village of Westerly, which has now become almost a city.

But a little way to the north, on the other road stands the old Stanton house, located a little off from the highway and occupied about 1785 by Samuel Stanton, who married Hannah, daughter of Col. Giles Russell. Whether he built the house is not certainly known, but after a time his daughter Hannah married Denison Noyes and lived there a few years, before they moved to Auburn, New York. Mr. Samuel Stanton married second, Mary Noyes, and she lived here till about the middle

of 1800, when she sold the place to Mrs. Emily, the widow of Mr. Frank Pendleton. Here, also, was held the first Catholic services before their church was built in Westerly.

At the very summit of Hinckley Hill, where now stands a grand old elm tree, once stood the first Hinckley house in Stonington, on land bought before 1717 of Benjamin Palmer, for this Samuel Hinckley was a member of the Road Church in 1798. This first house, after a time, was removed and a new one took its place, built about sixty years ago, which stands here now, large and square, and having a magnificent view of the surrounding country, even looking into four states, viz.: Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. At the south and east the grand old Atlantic can be seen, also Block Island, Watch Hill and all the islands near and far, along the coast. Near here also stood the old school house, built in 1799, long since gone, with the high stone post or mile stone near by.

On the left is the Rev. Nathaniel Eells house, built by him about 1735, and he lived there when he preached at the Center Meeting-house, the Road and the Old Academy at the Borough. Mr. Eells was patriotic as well as religious, for he left his pulpit to go to the battle of Lexington. It will be remembered that Mr. Eells preached at the East and West church, alternately during the year, for a long time, and his salary was to be the interest of the ministry land money, and one penny on the pound of the polls and ratable estate of the society, with firewood, cut and delivered to him, but troubles arose on account of various society meetings, to decide upon the location of a new meeting-house and society limits, which soon extended to other matters, and many became so exasperated that they refused to pay their minister's rates, while others refused to pay either principal or interest on the ministry land money. The result was, that the society became in debt to Mr. Eells for his salary, which of course embarrassed him and led his creditors to try and collect their claims, so he com-



menced a suit to recover his money and the society laid a tax to pay him, but this did not weaken his attachment for them or alienate the people from him, for during the whole of his stay here, a most friendly feeling existed between them all.

After a time the farm was sold and Mr. Eells went to live with his sons at the Borough. While Mr. Eells lived at this farm, he owned a horse, which became very refractory and obdurate and he was unable to ride him, unless the equine wished to go, so after vainly trying, he sold him to a man in New London



REV. NATHANIEL EELLS HOUSE.

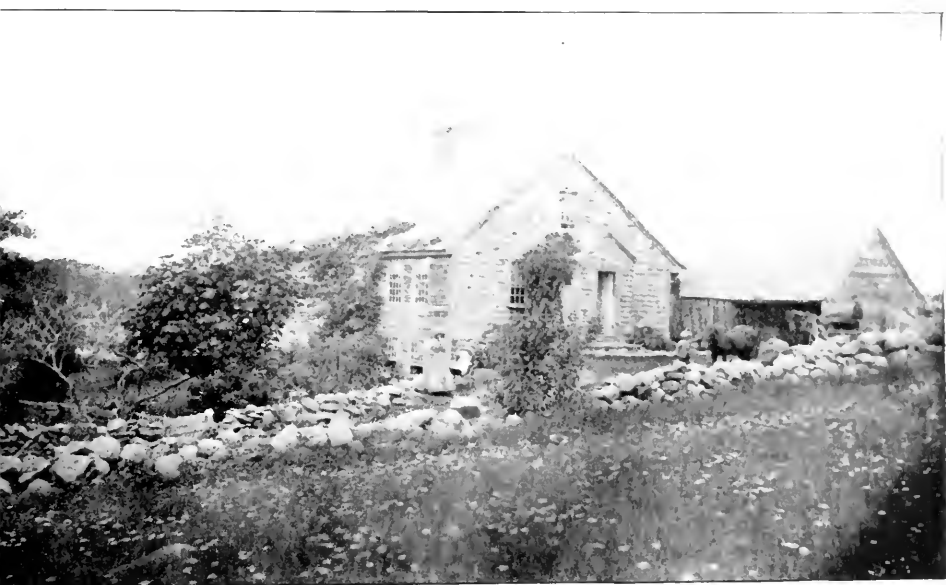
who let horses to travellers. One day, sometime after, Dr. Benjamin Franklin came to New London and wished to get a horse to ride to Newport, and it chanced that Rev. Mr. Eells' horse was led out for him to use, so on they came, till Mr. Eells' house on Hinckley Hill was reached, when the horse refused to go any further: the Doctor urged and argued, but the horse stood firm.

After a while Mr. Eells came out and accosted the stranger, saying, "Sir, I do not know you, but I know your horse, for I

have owned him and am well acquainted with him, and it is useless for you to try to ride him further tonight." So Dr. Franklin alighted and spent the night with Mr. Eells and the next morning, Mr. Eells lent him his own horse and he proceeded on his way to Newport. Upon his return, he again stopped at Mr. Eells and exchanged horses, expecting to ride speedily back to New London, but the horse refused to go in either direction until Dr. Franklin mounted him and then hired a lad, to lead him the whole way back to the Ferry. This Eells house has been recently made over and looks like a new house and belongs now to the Campbell family.

Down the hill, set back from the road and almost surrounded by a garden, where the vines and trellises nearly cover the whole front of the mansion, is the house long known as the States home, as Mr. Adam States, a Hollander, came here and married Mr. James Noyes' daughter, Esther; she died in a few years leaving children, and Mr. States married her sister Mary who was the widow of John Pendleton; later he married Cynthia Brown and still continued to live here. This land was part of the farm of Mr. James Noyes, which extended over to the farm now known as the Adam States, Jr. place, but it is quite probable that Mr. Noyes built this house for his daughter Esther, upon her marriage with Mr. States, in 1778, so it has been known as the States place for a hundred and twenty-five years. Mr. Erastus Wentworth of Norwich, Connecticut, married Mr. States' daughter Esther, and after her death married Cynthia, who was then living at this place alone with her brother Ichabod. Here was once a brick kiln, where all kinds of earthen ware was made by the States's; this one was managed by the father, and another was carried on at Stonington village by his sons; it was located at Kiln Wharf, or Shin Bone Alley, below the Capt. Williams house. Later the kiln at the States place was carried on by "Uncle Wentworth" as he was familiarly called. One of his sons was the Rev. Erastus, who was Missionary to China.

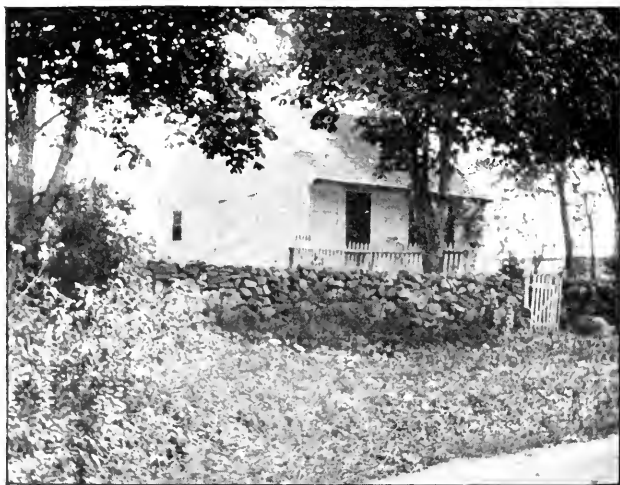
A story is told of Uncle Wentworth as follows : they attended the church at Pawcatuck, after it was formed in 1843, and were always present in good season with one exception, when it is said that one Sunday morning, he drove up to his door a trifle late to start for meeting, and helped his good wife into the two-seated wagon, which was made to serve the purpose of pleasure and utility, by removing the back seat at will. After Mrs. Wentworth was comfortably seated on the back seat, her



ADAM STATES OR WENTWORTH PLACE.

husband sprang in upon the front one, and feeling that they were a few moments behind the usual time, whipped up his horse, which started off at a quick gallop, and drove hurriedly along, up hill and down, till he drew rein before the meeting-house door and got out to assist his wife from the vehicle, when lo! and behold! neither wife nor seat were to be found; so springing back into the wagon, if possible quicker than

when he started from home, he drove furiously back to find Mrs. Wentworth standing at their door, patiently waiting for him to return. It is needless to say that the seat had tipped over backwards, and Mrs. Wentworth with it, but fortunately she was not hurt, though they were late at church, a thing never heard of before. In after years they cared for a little girl, who grew up, married, and now is the owner of this old homestead.



SAMUEL PALMER HOUSE.

At the very foot of Hinckley Hill, we see the little white-washed house set behind a low fence and showing the old stone chimney on the west side, clear to the ground. This was built by James Palmer long before the Revolution, and occupied in 1780 by his son Samuel, who married Hannah Eells, the minister's daughter, who lived on top of the hill; here they lived and brought up their large family of children. Their daughter Emily married Mr. Benj. F. Pendleton of Groton, and later she owned and lived at the Stanton house near Westerly.

Her brother Frank was drowned in Pawcatuck River in May, 1807, a lad of fifteen years. He is said to have run up to Samuel Hobart Hinckley's (who lived at the house on the hill), to see the new baby, who was born that morning, and asked Mrs. Hinckley to name the child for him, Frank, and then run on to overtake his people, who were going down the river fishing, where he met his death: the baby was named Frank Palmer Hinckley, and lived till 1833 when he died unmarried. Another son, J. Hobart, was in the war of 1812 in the Privateer brig



THE RHODES MANSION.

“General Armstrong,” at Fayal near the close of the war. The daughter Betsey lies buried beside her cousin Eunice in Evergreen Cemetery near Stonington, as there was always between them a friendship and loving companionship seldom witnessed. At this house lived Mr. Gilbert States’ family at one time, and after them many others have lived there as tenants and owners.

Around the bend of the road and past the old Noyes Burying ground, stands the Rhodes mansion house, built about

1760, a large, white, two-story, gambrel-roof house quite shaded by tall trees and borders of heavy fragrant green box. Capt. Simon Rhodes, who built this house and lived here, came from Newport and married Anne Babcock, and it has been in the family name till recently.

Within the memory of the present generation it was occupied by two sisters, born in the latter part of 1700, who in their early life were engaged to be married to two brothers, whose home was only a short distance east of here; preparations were being made for their marriage; even the two wedding gowns were made and laid aside to await the happy day, when, alas! one of the brothers was taken sick and after a short but severe illness, died. This caused great grief in both families and the bereaved sister felt that she could not endure the thought of the marriage of the other, so her wedding was given up, and the garments which had been made amid so many happy and joyous thoughts were laid aside, and these two sisters lived here together for many years, till death gathered them almost in one embrace, only a month apart, one aged eighty and the other seventy-seven years. The bereaved lover lived unmarried all his life. Scarcely is such tender devotion seen in this world.

The house which stands a few rods to the west was built almost on the site of an old one which was occupied by the brother of Anne Babcock, Jonathan, who married Esther Hazard. This land east of Anguilla brook was originally owned by one James York, whose grandson sold a part to this James Babcock, whose daughter married Capt. Simon Rhodes, and whose son married Miss Hazard and lived where Dea. Erastus Miner now dwells, in an old house which Dea. Miner removed when he erected the present one. Up the road to the north we come in sight of a hill, upon the top of which stands a large elm tree, near where was formerly a house occupied by Esquire Paul Wheeler's sister Mary, who married Charles Miner in 1741. This has long since gone and a little further to the left stands the new Randall house, built in the place of the old one which was burned some twenty years ago, belonging to Mr. Dudley Randall.

## CHAPTER NINTH.

“ The hills are dearest which our childish feet  
Have climbed the earliest, and the streams most sweet  
Are ever those at which our young lips drank,  
Stoop'd to their waters o'er the grassy bank.”

But a short distance almost directly north, stands another well preserved house, with a hip roof and an old style portico over the front door, which is found after passing the whole length of the east side, which is nearly seventy feet in length. The front hall is panelled and the rooms are unusually large, and in the great east one is the old style cupboard. In the long, low lean-to is found the kitchen and rooms beyond for milk and cheese, with all the necessary utensils. This house was purchased by Mr. John Randall, about 1750, of the descendants of Dea. Gershom Palmer, one of whom, it is supposed, was the builder. His son, Judge William Randall, whose home it was for many years, was Colonel of the 30th Regiment of Connecticut Militia during the war of 1812, and he had command of this regiment during the defense of Stonington.

From Col. Randall's house could be seen the tar barrel on Grant's hill, which by previous arrangement was to be lighted at night to let the people know when the enemy was approaching, so towards the evening on the 11th of August, 1814, when the British ships were seen outside the harbor, Mr. Nathan Smith left Stonington, to notify Col. Randall of their approach, and also proceeded to Westerly, to inform his father and four brothers, Joseph, Henry, Charles and Giles, who were at work there putting the wood-work into the old stone factory, and so at eight o'clock the next morning, the whole regiment, having seen the blaze of the tar barrel, had assembled at Stoning-

ton, ready and eager to defend the place, which was so well done that the British were repulsed, this being the only place along the line of battle which was not surrendered.

This house of Col. Randall's was renovated by his son, Mr. Elias Randall, during his life, new windows being put in and other improvements made. It is yet in the Randall name, but inhabited by Mr. Frank Merrill and family, which is a double reminder of ye olden time, for here can be found not only the



COL. WILLIAM RANDALL HOUSE.

old style house but the old time large family of children, twelve in number, keeping the old house alive with light and joy.

But a short distance west of the house of Col. Randall is Mr. Elias Miner's dwelling, where formerly stood the old Niles house. This was the original home of Walter Palmer's son, Dea. Gershom, built by him in 1687. By the doorstep of Mr. Miner's



house is a stone taken from the chimney of this old house which bears the following inscription :

16            87

P

G            A

Turning back upon the main road and driving on through a road shaded by elms, maples, wild cherry trees, and bordered with golden rod and wild carrot, we come in sight of Merriek's Hill, rising much above the surrounding land, and intersected by stone walls which mark the boundaries of the once various pastures and meadows. Here used to stand two old houses occupied by the ancestors of Isaac and Latham Miner, but both of these have long since fallen to decay. One of these, cosily nestled on the southeast side, was of the two-story front, and one in the rear order, and here lived Mrs. Elias Miner for many years. It was known as the Seabury house, where once lived the grandfather of the first bishop in America.

Scattered about this part of our town were the homes of many of the Breed family and it is still called Breedtown. The Jesse Breed house, probably built by his father, Mr. Amos Breed, stood where Mr. Herman Brown's house now stands and a hundred years ago was an old house, built in the regular mansion style, large, square, and later painted white. The rooms were very large, one of them taking 51 yards of carpet to cover the floor. Mr. Breed moved to Pawcatuck in the early part of 1800, and invented a ring spinner for spinning cotton, and afterwards sold his right to Mr. John Brown for \$100. This successful patent is still used in this and other countries. The stone near the side doorstep of Mr. Henry Breed's house was one of the stones which Mr. John Breed had in his mill for tanning leather, when he lived a few rods west of this house, with his wife, who was the daughter of Dea. Gershom Palmer, whom he married in 1690.

His first wife, Mary Kirtland, had died in Lynn, where he was born and lived until he came to Stonington and bought

land of Dea. Gershom Palmer and married his daughter Mercy. At their graves in Wequetequoek, we read, "In memory of a pious pair, this carved stone was erected here, viz., of Mr. John Breed and his wife Mercy, who lived together in ye marriage state in a most religious manner about 64 years and then deceased, leaving a numerous off-spring. He in 1751 about ninety years of age and she in 1752 about eighty-three years. Erected in the year 1772 by six of their children then living.

Behold the righteous live long on the earth,  
And in old age resign their breath.  
They and their off-spring here are blessed:  
When done with life they go to rest."

The old house of his grandson, Captain John Breed, Jr., was built in the early part of 1700, and was afterwards owned by Samuel Breed and his son John. At his death it became the property of Mr. Henry Breed, who built the new house now standing, and removed the old one which had stood here so many years. Mrs. Emily Breed Cleveland describes it as surrounded by pink and white rose bushes, and large clusters of lilacs, which gave forth in the spring such an odiferous perfume. At the back of the house stood the tall pear tree and the old pippin apple tree, long since fallen, which yielded much delicious fruit. The long row of currant bushes by the wall near the old well, with its sweep and moss-covered bucket; the bed of sage in the garden kept free from weeds and cut at intervals, to be dried for the family medicine chest, and in summer the long tables covered with sweet corn, drying out of doors for winter's use, all remain in the memory of those who dwelt there long ago. The Roswell Breed house still stands near the residence of Mr. Elias Miner, and it was for a long while painted yellow. This story and a half house has been now for a time uninhabited, but has been the home at different times of a number of families in our town.

Nearly a mile northeast of Col. Randall's farm, stands a little

back from the road, the Kenyon place, or what was once known as the Baldwin house, as it was from here that Mr. Asa Baldwin moved when he bought the Nehemiah Palmer place at Wequetequock, now called the Baldwin house. The home of the first Baldwin of Stonington was a short distance from the Yellow house farm, between there and the Col. Amos Chesebrough's place. At this second Baldwin house lived Mr. Asa Baldwin, who married Dolly Brown, with their family of seven children, none of whom ever married but the youngest, Betsey, who married Perry Kenyon and lived here till her death in 1874.

The house now occupied by Mr. Charles Champlin, was the home of Mr. Stephen Babcock some seventy years ago, but



KENYON HOUSE.

many years before that. Mr. George Bentley lived in the old house, which stood a little south of this and was burned one day just at noon, and as they had no ladders long enough to reach the roof the fire could not be extinguished. Now, a large butternut tree stands in the very cellar near the barn that will long mark the spot. Mr. Bentley, who married Lucy Gardner, built the present one-story white house, which stands by the roadside, about one hundred and twenty-five years ago, but having been kept in such good condition, it does not have the appearance of an old house. After the house was burned, Mr. Bentley was the miller for a time when the power of the river was used here for grinding grain.

Further on, turning at the right and over-looking White Rock, a thriving village in the near-by state of Rhode Island, we pass through a gate and climb a hill, on the summit of which stands the old Abiel Gardner homestead built in the middle of 1700: although now rebuilt, still some of the old beams and timbers are in the north side of this house which is occupied by Mr. John Gardner and family, his great-grandson. It is a large, double, wood-colored house: the front and inside doors have the old-fashioned iron handles and latch, and within



STEPHEN BABCOCK PLACE.

is found a deal of old-time furniture. Stands of all sizes, from the very small one, just large enough to hold the one tallow candle, with its tray for snuffers, to the large one with its polished mahogany surface, which can be turned up at will against the wall. The large cherry table, chests of drawers, large chairs, smaller fiddle-back ones, corner ones, little rockers, low-boys, high-boys and peculiar old-style wash stands, are all found there, while the old clock still ticking away the hours, with the date 1794 and "bought of William Stillman, price

£10," written on the inside of the long door, which shuts away the pendulum and ponderous weights, stands in the east room. Old-style bureaus, mahogany bedsteads, looking glasses with the painted pictures in the upper section, wheels of all descriptions, from the large wool wheel to the quill and little linen wheel can there be seen.

Could you but look within the closed wooden door of the high cupboard in the upper chamber, you would find such a quantity of glass, pewter and wooden ware, as we seldom see

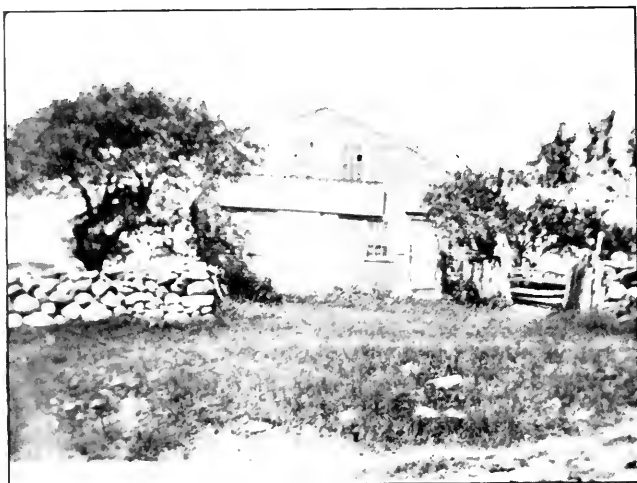


JOSHUA GARDNER HOUSE.

together. A half dozen bowls of different designs, pink, blue and pencil ware, plates, cups and saucers, tall pitchers, tea pots and tea caddys. The wooden plates, oldest of all, quite rough on the surface, from hard wear, glass decanters and mugs, pewter plates, poringer and molasses cup, fill the shelves.

Even the third story has its quota of olden days, for there we find several hogsheads which never were put in through the doors, but are so huge, that they must have been placed there before the outside was covered and boarded up, and presumably built for the safe keeping of grain. In another

apartment are the "quilting frames" set up with a patchwork quilt on ready to be tied. In the large stone chimney near the roof, is the smoke house, where pork and beef hams are even yet dried. This house holds much that is modern in furniture and many collections of minerals and books in their separate cases. Here also is found another proof of John Denison being a shop keeper, for in a little old brown book is written "Abiel Gardner's account book, bought of John Denison in 1746." Within this house lives the fifth generation, bearing



BRIGGS JEFFORDS HOUSE.

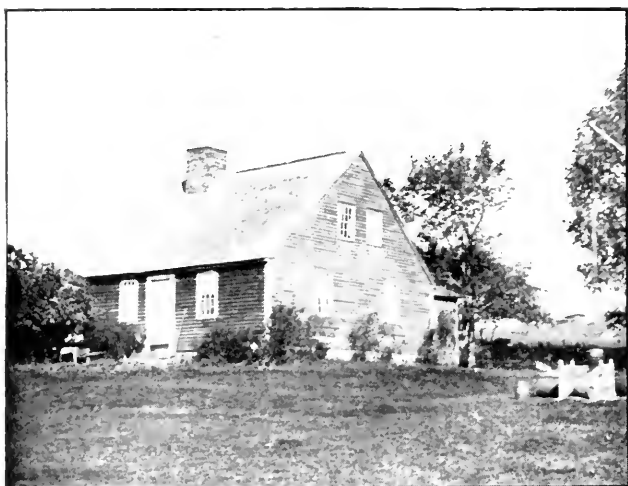
the same name, and here the sweet "Thee and Thon" is heard, and most fair and gracious are the faces which look out from within their quaint drab bonnets.

Very near the gate through which you return to the road, stood, till a short time ago, a very old house, built in the early part of 1700, by Briggs Jeffords. One of the very first dams thrown across the Pawcatuck River, a little below the pleasant village of White Rock, was named for this man, and he lost his life here: while opening the fish gap, he slipped into the

water and was soon drowned. After Mr. Jeffords' death this house and farm was sold to Caleb Gardner, brother to Joshua Gardner, Sr., who, when he moved to Ohio, sold it in 1796 to his brother Joshua, who owned it for a time. Then it was purchased by William Vincent, Sr., before 1800, who moved from there in 1802, and his son William afterwards lived here for a time, when he sold it to Thomas Hinckley and again it was sold by him to Mr. John Pendleton, who owned it until his death. It was then bought by Rebecca Scott, more familiarly known as Becky Scott; she married Joseph Herrington, and was quite noted about here as a fortune teller, consequently her house was often frequented by those eager to peer into their future destiny. After their death, the house was not again used as a dwelling; being so dilapidated, it was torn down and the last of it was burned in the spring of 1902.

A mile or so below here, is the old Adam States, Jr., house, situated a little back from the road, in a grassy meadow. It is a wood-colored, one story and a half house, now uninhabited, with the windows somewhat broken and altogether fast going to decay; but it has known other and better days. It was built about the middle of 1700, by Mr. James Noyes, familiarly called "Jimmy," who married Margaret Woodburn, of Preston, Connecticut. Four of their daughters died in young womanhood and are buried in the family lot near this house. In 1804, after his wife and children were all dead, he went to live with his son-in-law, Adam States, Sr. who lived at the Wentworth place, which was built on his own land and probably by him, for his daughter Esther, when she married Mr. States, and here he remained till his death in 1806. His grandson, Adam States, Jr., had married Fanny Chesebrough in December, 1800, and begun housekeeping at the Joseph Smith farm; there they lived for a time and then for a while at Wequetequoek, till his brother Noyes died on Long Island, when he inherited the old Noyes homestead, and they came there to live and remained till their death.

About this old place cluster many pleasant memories of by-gone days. Among them it is told that when the great preacher Whitefield, made his seventh and last visit here in 1769, going from Providence to Norwich on horseback, he stopped at this house and asked for water for his horse. Mr. Noyes invited him into the house and gave him a cordial invitation to dine with them and offer prayer, which he did remarking "that prayer and provender hindereth no man on his journey."



THE JIMMY NOYES HOMESTEAD.

Below here, coming down to the village of Westerly, we see on the side hill near Downerville, and a little below the Catholic church and parsonage, the old Helm's house, a good deal changed, but still with the old gambrel roof which it had when it was built. It was occupied about 1760 by Oliver Helms who married Katharine Greenman. This Mr. Helms owned a large tract of land about Berry Hill. In this house many different families have been sheltered, some have kept store here, and again it has been used as tenements.





THE HELMS HOUSE.

In Westerly, on the Pawcatuck side, near the "Dry Bridge" (as it is called), where a grand, old, elm tree throws its lights and shadows over house and yard, stands the old homestead of Mr. George Sheffield, built by him about 1800. His daughter



THE SHEFFIELD HOUSE.

married Mr. George Gavitt who lived here, when he was the singing-school teacher at the Road Church, for several winters, about 1840. He had a fine voice and enjoyed music, and his handsome face would glow with enthusiasm when he was teaching. Many yet remember these Sunday evenings with pleasure, when those grand old tunes and hymns were learned, under his instruction. It is yet owned by the Gavitt family.

A little east of here, stands the old house with its extensive frontage which formerly belonged to Dr. William Robinson, a



DR. WILLIAM ROBINSON HOUSE.

physician of the old school. He kept a boarding-house here, and many newly-wedded couples began their married life within its walls. In this same house, upon the other side, also lived Mr. Elias Brown, born about 1760, who married Hepsibah White; he run the grist mill, owned by Mr. Jonathan Richardson, which was situated a little further to the east, and close to the river. Mr. Brown's son John lived at one time in the old Stanton house on the road which leads to Hineckley Hill, where he owned a great deal of land about there, and was a very rich man for those days.

On the opposite side of the street and quite near to the Pawcatuck Bank, stands the Thomas Noyes house, built before 1800 by Mr. Samuel Brand. It is a large, square edifice with the windows full of small, peculiar-shaped, window panes. It was in former days a house of a good degree of grandeur, but now the street has become almost a business one, and dwelling houses of the modern architecture are built on a more retired street. In this house, long ago Mr. Jesse Moss first began his



THOMAS NOYES HOUSE.

business career by keeping store, and giving out weaving to many different families.

Nearer the bridge is the so-called "Martha Noyes" house, built and owned by Mr. Samuel Brand, Jr., who kept a tavern there nearly a century ago. This house is partially concealed by the numerous small stores which have been built recently in front of it. This Martha was the wife of Joseph Noyes and daughter of Capt. Samuel and wife Abigail Thompson. Capt. Samuel was for many years the hospitable keeper of "The Inn," as this house was originally called; he was a great athlete in

his younger days, and it is told of him that he would place nine large, empty hogsheads, with one head out, in a row, and then would jump from one into the other and so on till he reached the ninth. After his death, his widow, Abigail, kept the tavern, and among other distinguished guests who were sheltered here was a Mr. Fowl, a native of Watertown, Mass., he was a midshipman from the Frigate, "Constitution" lying at New London, in 1811, and who was taken care of for a week or more, after having been wounded in a duel, which took place near the



PAUL BABCOCK PLACE.

present Quarry Hill. He lived only about three weeks and is buried at the Fort Griswold cemetery at Groton. Of this incident Rev. Frederick Denison tells us in his book of *Westerly and its Witnesses*.

Driving down Mechanic Street, past the row of pleasant houses beyond the fine Printing Press works of the Cottrell Brothers, and on past the Thread Mill, which is a comparatively new industry here, and along the bank of the Pawcatuck river, whose sides are bordered by houses and small farms, we come to a turn in the road which takes one up a long hill, upon the

summit of which stands the historic Paul Babcock house, built about 1750. It commands a grand view of country, river, and even out to the ocean. It looks scarcely like an old house, being so well preserved, built in the style of the mansion house, square, large and high with the deep-throated chimney in the middle, the front door in the center, and large rooms on either side, while a fine row of elms are before the door.

Dr. Joshua Babcock, who built this house, was at one time Chief Justice of Rhode Island's Superior Court. He gave this house to his son, Col. Harry Babcock, for life and at his death it was to belong to his son Paul, who married Nancy Bell, and later, her cousin, Lucy Bell. He had fifteen children and lived here, where also Col. Harry lived and raised his children. Dr. Joshua Babcock was one of the most celebrated and well-known country physicians in all the section about here. He was very methodical in everything; a person of about the middle height, rather spare frame, light and active. He had three sons, Henry, Luke and Adam, who was the principal one in the leather breeches lawsuit.

Luke was a clergyman, and Col. Harry was a most remarkable man; he was always a brave officer and was in the French and Indian wars. He was Captain of the battle of Fort George, Major in 1756 and Colonel at Ticonderoga, where he led his regiment at its capture, and where he received a wound in the knee while pushing his men within forty yards of the breast-work, and had to be borne from the field; three of his officers were also wounded. When the news reached England, the royal approbation was expressed through General Amherst, who in his letter to Rhode Island, complimented Col. Babcock in the warmest terms. Some time after, when Col. Harry was in England, he was allowed an appointment with the Queen, who upon meeting him, graciously extended her hand to be kissed, but Col. Harry, with a most courteous bow, threw his arm around her neck and gave her a kiss upon her cheek (and was not reprimanded). This historic old Babcock place is now owned by the Cottrell Brothers of Westerly.

A little further down, near the Pawcatuck river, where the village of Avondale, on the Rhode Island shore, can be plainly seen, at a bend in the road, stands the old house, now almost in ruins, of Alexander Bradford. He was an intelligent man, quick at repartee, but sometimes profane. The story is told of him and Squire Woodbridge, who was a great man and large land owner of those days, that at a town meeting which was then held in the meeting-house at the Road, the question of the acceptance of a layout of a road or highway, from Wequete-



OLD BRADFORD HOUSE.

quoek to the south part of Pawcatuck, was presented by Col. Bradford, and after being discussed, was voted down. This naturally vexed the Colonel, and he vented his feelings, during the meeting, by a volley of profane words, which Esquire Woodbridge answered by saying that "He was astonished to hear a man of his standing use such language in the house of God," to which Col. Bradford replied, "Tut, tut, Esquire Woodbridge, you pray a good deal, and I swear a good deal, but we don't either of us mean anything by it."

Another story is told of Col. Bradford and Esquire Woodbridge, that one day when the Squire was carting off stones from some of his good ground and depositing it upon the old Indian graveyard, at Taugwank, near Echo Farm, Col. Bradford drove along, stopped and called out to him, in his usual tone of voice, "if he believed in the resurrection." "Why do you ask me that question?" replied Squire Woodbridge. "Oh," said the Colonel, "nothing, only I was thinking what a damnable load you were giving those Indians to rise with."



THE DAVIS HOMESTEAD.

The house which stands near Osbrook Grove at Pawcatuck is a historic landmark. It has been in the Davis family for a long time, at least 137 years, and no one knows exactly when it was built, but it is supposed to have been constructed about 1700, by Thomas Stanton, grandson of Thomas, the Indian Interpreter, who married Thankful Denison in 1713, and it was left by them to their son Robert, who leased the place in 1765 to John Davis, who was then only seventeen years old, and his father, John Davis of Long Island, purchased it in 1772.

This house was a grand mansion for the time in which it was built, and is now in such a good state of preservation, both inside and out, that one cannot realize that it was built so long ago. The massive timbers used in the frame and the original coverings of shingles, three feet in length, are still intact. The rooms are very large and are elaborately wainscotted. In one corner of the east room or parlor is a large niche or buffet, hand-carved at the top like a fluted shell, with closed doors below. It contains quaint shelves, where can now be seen old-



WILLIAM STANTON HOUSE.

style china. The front staircase railing, hand-carved of solid mahogany, was brought from England, and one of the panels in the side of the stairway is six feet long. The hall is wainscotted in broad panels and all the rooms have deep cornice and corner posts.

The west great room, nineteen by twenty feet, has the cupboard over the fireplace with glass doors, through which can be seen the blue and white crockery, while on the high mantle in the long kitchen rests the glass, brass and iron candlesticks,



the pink and blue plates and platters for fish with a separate china drain upon which the fish rests. This room had the original fireplace of by-gone days, nearly eight feet in length and correspondingly deep, with the crane, from which hangs the ancient trammel for the pots and kettles. The large brick oven at the end reminds one of the quantities of good things which have been drawn from its capacious depths, during the years that this house has sheltered so many generations. It is now owned by the sixth John Davis in direct descent, and the



THOMAS STANTON'S HOMESTEAD.

beautiful grove, near the water, a little to the south, called Osbrook, gives its euphonious name to this place.

A short distance from here is the William Stanton house, built a hundred and fifty years ago. It is a one-story house, surrounded by a low, white fence, and large bunches of fragrant, green box are on either side of the front door. The old schoolhouse stood not far from here, on the opposite side of the road from the present one, where we now turn, and leaving the main road, drive through a forest of magnificent trees, past several new houses, until at the foot of a hill, we pass

through a gate and go up to the old house, built by Mr. Thomas Stanton, grandson of Thomas the first, who married Thankful Denison about 1713. This is a double, two-story, wood-colored house, with the large chimney in the center. From here you get a most delightful view of the surrounding country and adjacent water of the Sound. This has been the home of many different families, of whom Mr. Elias Stanton was one, as he owned it for some years and sold it in 1829, when he went to live at Utica, New York. They made their



LEMUEL PALMER'S HOME.

trip in their wagon, drawn by stout horses, and accompanied by all necessary stock and provisions.

About a half mile west of here, on the main road to Wequet-equoock, is the Lemuel Palmer place, built about 1750, by his father, James Palmer. It is well preserved, painted white, and does not look a century old. Near this house we see a strange freak of nature, an immense elm tree, apparently growing out of a large rock. From this house have gone out five beautiful brides to grace other homes. Mrs. Alden Palmer and Mrs. Henry Smith remained in Stonington, while Mrs. Henry

Rhodes and Mrs. Paul Palmer went to Trenton, New York, to live, and Mrs. Zeba Palmer resided in Brooklyn, New York.

The one brother, John, who grew to manhood, married Mary Smith, a lovely, whole-souled woman, who lived at this place for many years, till her husband's death, when she returned to her old home in the Borough, at the Col. Joseph Smith homestead.

## CHAPTER TENTH.

“ Here is the place, right over the hill  
Runs the path I took,  
You can see the gap in the old wall still,  
And the stepping stones in the shallow brook,  
There is the house, with the gate red-barred,  
And the poplars tall,  
And the barn’s brown length, and the cattle-yard,  
And the white horns tossing above the wall.”

As we think of the early settlers at Wequetequock, we see the fine monument so lately erected to their memory, in the graveyard there, overlooking the blue waters of the Cove, and here are also a few old houses left standing in a good degree of preservation and kept so by their descendants, on account of the holy memories of the past. A number of cellars also can be seen near here, where once were other historic houses. The noted Walter Palmer lived here and several of his sons, and the story of the lives of two of them is really pathetic, for then as now, accidents and sorrows were the lot of all.

Elihu Palmer, the oldest son of the second wife of Walter Palmer, died at twenty-nine years, from a wound inflicted accidentally by himself, on this wise. He was mowing marsh grass near the Cove, with a scythe, on the other end of which was a spear, and seeing a fish (flounder) in the water, he turned his scythe quickly and thrust the spear into the fish, when the scythe caught upon his neck, cutting him so terribly, that after a time death resulted from the effects of the wound.

The fourth son of Capt. Walter was Benjamin, born in 1642, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, but he came to Stonington to live. It is found upon record that “ August 10th, 1681, Ben-

jamin Palmer brought home his bride," but who she was or where she lived is shrouded in mystery, whether there were any children, does not appear, but by old deeds, it is shown that he gave his lands to his three nephews, Moses, Daniel and Jonathan, in return for their good care of him, for they were to care for him during his life and provide for him a Christian



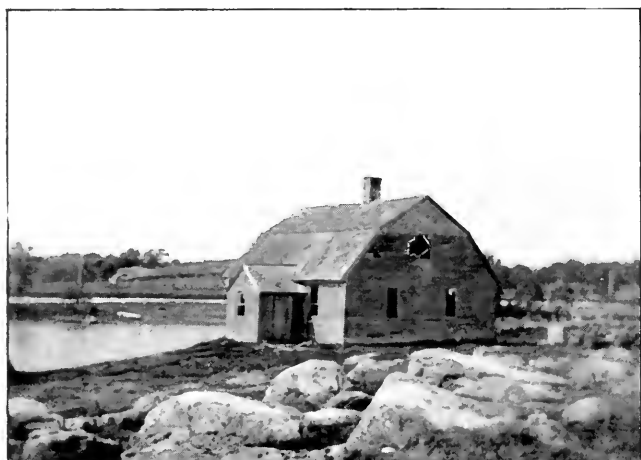
BALDWIN HOUSE.

and decent burial. This was signed February 17th, 1715-16. They fulfilled the trust, for in the burial ground, there may be seen his head-stone erected by them. He died April 10th, 1715-16, aged 74 years.

Another son of Capt. Walter, Moses, built his house near at hand, which was taken down about 1850. The site is now marked by the old cellar and the Balm of Gilead trees. It was later

owned and occupied by Capt. William Slack and long known as the Slack house. It was of the two-story in front order, with a long, low roof in the rear, where one could easily reach the eaves troughs and swing themselves from the open door on the north, while the rooms were very large and low.

Walter Palmer's son Nehemiah built in July, 1700, what is now known as the Baldwin house, which stands brown and square-roofed just east of the burying-ground, on the road formerly known as the Indian trail to Pawcatuck Rock, where



THE FISH PLACE.

Thomas Stanton's trading station was. The rooms in this house are all large and high between joints. They have the corner cupboard, summer beams and cornice of most of the old houses. The land here has been very productive, for in 1822, when one Amos Denison lived here, 17,000 lbs. of cheese was made annually, and on this farm is the famous "Split Rock" mentioned as a landmark in the old records. This is a curiosity, being split directly in the middle, one half is turned completely around so that the outside faces the other half, and as dynamite was unknown in those days, surely some other mighty

power was at work here. Many families have made their home here, and Mr. Nehemiah Gallup, who is yet living was born here in 1817. It is now owned by Dr. George D. Stanton of the Borough.

The old Fish house at Wequetequock has a special interest for the Road Society, as Capt. Daniel Fish lived there with his wife Sarah, who was daughter of Oliver and Sarah Hilliard, and niece of the one who gave the land for the cemetery at the Road. At Mr. Fish's death, his widow became the owner by will of this house, provided she did not marry again, but if she did, the place reverted to the First Congregational Society. Mrs. Fish not being quite satisfied with the will, and having an offer of marriage from Mr. Thomas Stanton, she accepted him, and so the Road Society acquired its new possession, which it still retains, while she went to live at Mr. Stanton's house, but a short distance east of this, and after his death she soon married again, Mr. John Nichols, and lived for a time at Preston, but for some reason, finally returned to Stonington, and lies buried in the Cemetery near the Church at the Road.

This old Fish house has sheltered numerous families. In 1785 Reuben Palmer, who married Zerviah Stanton of Preston, lived here, but it has now been rented for a long term of years. It is still standing, worn brown from age and the elements, being built about 1740, a gambrel-roof, one-story house. At the center on the north and south sides, are two small lean-tos with outside doors in each. The timbers are somewhat decayed, the windows broken or gone, and it is one of the three old houses in town, uninhabited and fast going to decay.

Further down near the water, over the railroad bridge and through a gate, is the Joseph Chesebrough place, formerly known as the Dr. Nathan Palmer house, built by him in 1736. It is a large, double, two-story house, with three windows on the east side above and below: a new style porch has been added recently. Dr. Palmer lived here till he moved to the Borough and built a new house there, when his son, Denison Palmer,

lived here for years. From this house have gone out to homes elsewhere, nineteen brides.

If you visit this old homestead now, you will find the hostess, Miss Fanny, able and willing to tell you of many interesting and historic facts in the Palmer, Stanton and Chesebrough families, who formerly lived about there, of the Rufusin house and nine daughters, who were considered such beauties that people came from a great distance to see them. She will show you the chimney stone taken from Samuel Stanton's house.



DR. NATHAN PALMER'S HOME.

(which used to stand southwest of the Baldwin house) marked with an S. and I. and the date 1748, also having upon it a rude outline of the house, that was two stories in front and one in the rear, and in which Mr. Elias Stanton lived at one time.

In the Dr. Palmer house is the usual open fire-place where we see the iron fire-frame: the small tea-kettle suspended from the crane, and the fore-stick resting on the little black iron fire-dogs. Above this are the panels, cornice and summer beams. In the corner cupboard are some fine old pieces of crockery.



The flip mug and tureen, with the figure of the Phoenix rising out of its ashes. The plates of pink and blue, with their cups and saucers rest upon the shelves. Near the little, old, round, center table is the small rocker and the high-backed straight chairs, and in our mind's eye, we see the forms which used to flit through these pleasant rooms and almost hear the conversation in the long ago.

The story is related of one of the Palmer girls from Wequetequoek, who had met and become acquainted with a young man



JAMES BARCOCK HOMESTEAD.

from the north part of the town, who after a time concluded to marry her, and they became engaged. He was evidently of a moderate and unimpassioned nature, for after they had been engaged to be married for over two years, he received a letter from her, declaring that she would never marry him, but giving no reasons; of course he was much surprised and chagrined, and went at once to her brother to find out the reason from him, but finding that he was as ignorant of the real cause as himself, he insisted that he should find out from his sister and report to him, so the brother enquired of her the cause of her

sudden change of plans, but she refused to tell: upon being urged and urged, she finally said, "Well, if you must know, I'll tell you. I have known him for three years, and been engaged to him for two years, and he has never offered to kiss me, and I vow I won't marry him," and she never did.

About halfway between Westerly and Stonington, stands the house owned by Mr. Daniel Brown, and a little to the south-east, we see a gate which leads through a pasture to an old house, built by Mr. James Babcock in 1740, as a board which is over the front door testifies. This James was the son of James and Sarah (Vose) Babcock, who married Phebe Swan in 1730. Their grandson, Elihu Babcock, who married Elizabeth Jeffries, also lived, died, and was buried here, and his daughter married Joshua Robinson, who lived at this very place for a time, before he built the new house which stood where Mr. Brown's house now stands. This Babcock house was somewhat rebuilt by Mr. Daniel Brown in 1882, but it is still a most quaint looking building, gambrel-roof and shingled on three sides, with only one window in the whole east side. It has the big stone chimney in the middle and the heavy oaken outside door, whose threshold is worn smooth by the many feet which have passed over it during these one hundred and sixty years.

Uncle Harry Hinckley's house stands very near the roadside, with the head of the Cove quite near the back of the house, and at low tide can be seen the stepping-stones, just below, which were used for crossing the stream. This house with improvements and additions was made from the old dwelling place of Fergus McDowell, the Scotch Irishman, whose old house stood a little north of this, in past the crib, in the latter part of 1600. This Fergus McDowell had a brother Archibald and sister Jane in Ireland, and he married Mary, daughter of William Clesbey, who probably owned the land about here, as there is yet an orchard known as the Clesbey orchard somewhat to the northwest of this house, which is

mentioned in the old deeds, giving the boundaries of these lands.

William Chesebrough, grandson of the first William, married Mary McDowell, daughter of Fergus, and lived at the old Chesebrough place, where the first William lived, but a short distance from Mr. Irtis Main's present residence. Their son, King David as he was called, was a remarkable man, and different opinions locate his house (which he bought of Charles Chesebrough) in several places upon this road.



HARRY HENSCKLEY HOUSE.

The deed is as follows: To all people to whom these presents shall come. Greeting,—Know ye, that I, Charles Chesebrough of Stonington, County of New London, State of Connecticut, Farmer, for the consideration of £600, lawful money to me in hand paid to my full satisfaction by David Chesebrough of Newport, County of Newport, State of Rhode Island, Gentleman, do give, grant, bargain, sell, alien and convey and confirm unto him, the said David Chesebrough, his heirs, executors and administrators and assigns forever, one certain tract or parcel

of land, lying and being in Stonington aforesaid, at a place known and called by the name of Wequetequock, and containing by estimation 68 acres, be the same more or less, and is bounded and butted as follows :

Beginning at a mear stone, standing by Wequetequock Cove, about fourteen rods east of the dwelling house of the said Charles : thence northwesterly by William Chesebrough's land about 89 rods to a mear stone, thence northwesterly by said William's land to a mear stone standing in the dividing line of the said Charles' and William's land which is the south bound



KING DAVID CHESEBROUGH'S ESTATE.

of a lot of land the said Charles sold to Denison Palmer, thence northwesterly by said Palmer's land to a mear stone standing in the dividing line of Moses Yeoman's land, thence southwesterly by Moses Yeoman's land and Samuel Chesebrough's land, to a mear stone standing in a corner of a stone wall, about twelve rods easterly of the said now Samuel's dwelling house. Thence east and southerly by said Samuel's land to a mear stone standing by a ditch and swamp, adjoining a lot of land I bought of Denison Palmer, known and called by the name of Clesby orchard, thence west southerly by said ditch in swamp,

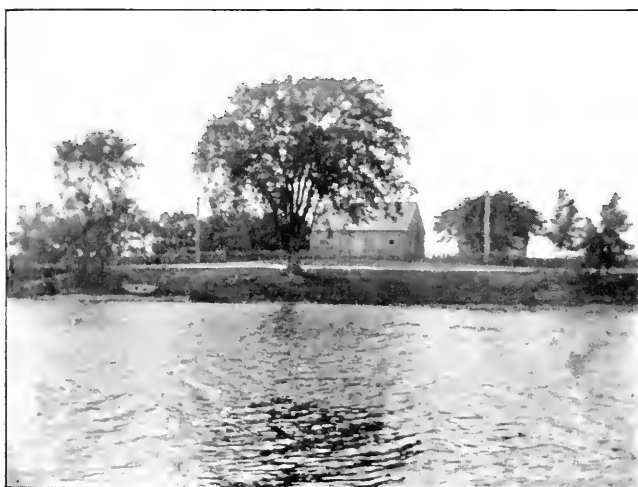
by said Samuel's land, until it comes to Wm. Chesebrough's field, thence east southerly by said William's land to a lot of land I sold to Henry Burch, then by said Burch land to the Cove. Reference being had to the Deed of the said Burch land. Thence by said Cove to the first mentioned bound. To have and to hold the above granted and bargained premises, forever." Signed by Charles Chesebrough in 1777.

The house which has been pointed out to some of our oldest inhabitants as the home of King David, is now known as the Charles Main house, which is situated east of the highway in Wequetequoek, and nestled among the vines and climbing roses which cover the west side. It is a low, gambrel-roof house, with the front door at the west end facing the road. On the east side of the house, in an underground room, was his store, where he sold merchandise to the neighboring people, and it has been kept for this same purpose all down the years, even during the lifetime of Mr. Charles Main.

King David was born in Stonington in 1702, but went to Newport into business as a merchant. He married there, first, Abigail —, and she died in 1738, aged 27 years, and is buried in the common ground at Newport. Later he married Abigail Rodgers, and still later, Margaret——— and had four children: one daughter married an English officer, and went to London to live. At the time of the Revolution, when the British held possession of Newport, they confiscated all his merchandise, and he returned in 1776 to Stonington, where his grave-stone records "that he sat down on his estate," where he lived till his death in 1782. His brother, Mr. Thomas Chesebrough, was educated at Harvard College and received several degrees. On his stone in the Stonington cemetery is this inscription: "He was a good scholar, a great historian and well acquainted with the Liberal Arts and Sciences. He died with great resignation in the prime of life, unmarried, December 11th, 1754, aged 48 years."

A few rods to the north, standing on the bank and overlook-

ing the Cove is the low, wood-colored house built, in 1787, by Gov. Thurston of Rhode Island, and purchased by Mr. Samuel Stanton of Mr. Ephraim Williams. It was occupied for a long time by Mr. Constant Taylor, before Mr. Stanton lived there. The rooms show many marks of age and the great chimney fills a large portion of the upper chambers. On this same spot some years before, stood a large house of the two-story in front order with a long, low roof in the rear. It was used as a tavern stand, and a school was also kept in this tavern-room at



SAMUEL STANTON HOUSE.

one time by Mr. Ezra Denison. The old sign post which once held a creaking sign remained long after the house was gone, and here notices were posted up, and here also "trainings" were held. In this old house some have thought that King David Chesebrough lived.

The house a little to the north, which stood where now Mr. Irtis Main lives, was called the Bill Batter or Silver Billy house. It was large, two-story with the long sloping roof, and was taken down about 1842. This place was owned by Mr.

Jonathan Chesebrough shortly before its removal, and stories are told of a man who was deranged, being kept here for some time and by his screams frightened children when they passed on their way to school, and by others it was said to be haunted. The present house was put up by the Collinsees for Mr. Elias Denison as a home for Mr. George Congdon, a blacksmith, who came from Voluntown to assist him in his blacksmith work, afterwards he moved to North Stonington and the house was enlarged to its present size.



THE BIRTHPLACE OF CAPT. CHARLES P. WILLIAMS.

The old house standing on the hill above the Chapel, having a fine view of the Cove and Atlantic Ocean, was one of the mansion houses of the day, built as a half house originally, by George Palmer about 1783, and was exchanged by him, with a Mr. Butler for land in New York state, which when he went there to settle upon, he found that the title was not good and so returned.

This house stands, large and brown, on a rocky hill, with the roof sloping down to the windows of the first story in the rear.

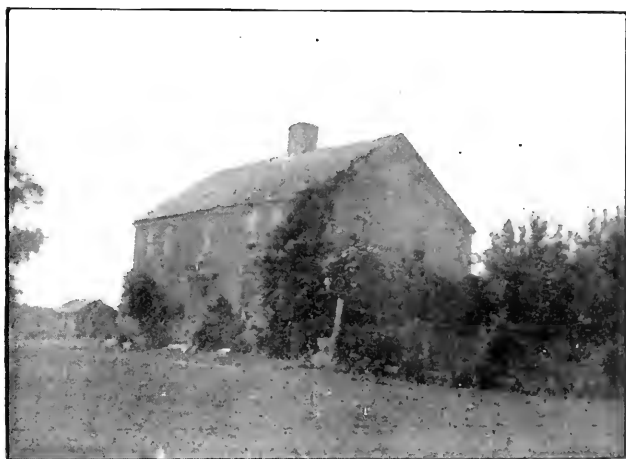
with a lean-to on the north side, while on the broad west side, above and below, are three windows. The old-fashioned outer door on the south and west side, with their old-style knockers and the hand-made cornice in the rooms, all testify of age. This house was occupied by Mr. Ephraim Williams after he married his second wife in 1787, and here his son, Capt. Charles, was born. It is now the property of the Second Congregational Society, having been given to them by Capt. Williams in his will, thus giving help through all time to that church.

Many other families have dwelt in this house in the last hundred years, among them, Mr. Isaac Wheeler, Jr., who lived here when the schoolhouse was built which stands there now, though somewhat changed, the door having been put in the middle when it was formerly at the corner, and the building turned to face the road, as it used to stand with end to the big boulder by the road, which was a good place for the scholars to spring upon from the door and then slide off into the road. This rock was finally split up and used for the foundation of the chapel built there some years later. This schoolhouse was built in 1811 by subscription and was considered the finest one in town, with its arched roof, while the number of children on the list then was over ninety.

The first grist mill in Stonington was also built near here in 1662 and stood a little northeast of the dwelling house occupied a few years ago by Mr. Elias Denison's family. The old mill was sold in 1663 to Mr. Luke Bromley, who run it for a number of years, and after him came many other millers who operated the mill. About 1760 Capt. Andrew Palmer lived in the mill-house which stood near, a low, double, one-story affair with sloping roof, having the front door not quite in the middle of the house, for on one side of it was a room much larger than the other, having two windows, while the room on the other side had only one. Quite near, standing in the line of the old stone-wall, was the well with its long sweep and bucket, free to all passers-by on this road.



Mr. Elias Denison, who has lived in Wequetequoek for over sixty years, can well remember the Old Mill house, which stood in the very place and over the very cellar where Mr. Asa Vincent built his barn, now standing, just in the rear of his house and that of Mr. Denison's. It belonged then to Mr. Andrew Palmer, but it seems quite probable that it was the very first mill-house built in 1661, which is mentioned in the agreement signed by the early settlers, one of whom was Elihu Palmer, brother of Capt. Andrew's great-grandfather, who died without



ELIAS CHESEBROUGH HOUSE.

children, and his will was burned at New London in 1781, and the only knowledge we have of his property is from a deed on the Stonington records.

This house was built in the manner of the old houses of that date, very similar to the old Jackson house in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, which was built in 1664. It faced the south and the road went in front of the house, which was a story and a half building, with the north roof sloping so that the plates rested on the ground and with only one small window in the gable end, east and west. In the early part of 1800 this was a

very old house, and no other is remembered as being built in this manner about here so that it seems evident that it was the very first mill-house. The old mill stood a little further east and quite near the water. In this old house Mrs. Mary Chesebrough Fish, widow of Elisha, taught school, and after it became too dilapidated for a home, it was used as a blacksmith shop by Mr. Abel Crandall for some time, but finally was taken down and the barn built over the cellar.

Turning at the Samuel Stanton house and passing through



EZRA CHESEBROUGH HOUSE.

several gates, you will climb "Tripe Hill," at the summit of which stands the Elias Chesebrough house, from which a fine view is obtained of the nearby valleys and hills, while the grand, old Atlantic ocean in the distance can be plainly seen. This large, double, wood-colored house was built in the latter part of 1700. It opens into an old-fashioned garden on the east side, which is full of vines and shrubs.

Mr. Elias Chesebrough lived here in 1793, and married Lucretia Palmer, sister of Sarah, who married Mr. Chesebrough's brother Ezra, and resided a half mile further on, where through pastures and orchards, up hill and down, over rocks and through

gates, you follow the path and wend your way in "Shacktown" as it used to be called, till you reach this small, one-story house, resting contentedly here amid the environments of nature. Could these old walls speak, they would tell much that would interest us of this neighborhood and its social life before 1800. Here, Mr. Jesse Dean, who was Town Clerk in 1807, holding the office for over twenty years, at the Dean Mills, lived the latter part of his life, with his daughter Nancy, who married Mr. Ezra Chesebrough, Jr., in 1828.

And so at last we come again to Wequetequock, where our ancestors first came, and although there are a few other century old houses, yet standing in town, their history is shrouded in oblivion or unknown to the writer. Could these have been traced, they would doubtless have proven most interesting, but still we find that Stonington is rich in her "Old Homes."

## APPEND A

### CUSTOMS AND FASHIONS.

The food which our ancestors ate was chiefly game and shell fish, with maize or Indian corn, which they planted, having put in each hill a fish, as the Indians had taught them. Then, there were bears, wolves and deer, also squirrels and rabbits, and many a dainty dish was served from this wild game. Their breakfast was often of salt meat and bean soup, seasoned with herbs, called bean porridge. For the dimer, which was at noon, they had boiled beef and pork, Indian pudding, wild game, potatoes and turnips. Pumpkins were cooked in various ways. Succotash (corn and beans) was made in the summer, and samp (corn bruised and boiled and eaten with milk) was served in the fall. At supper, the cold meats and vegetables, left from the dinner, with little cakes made from corn meal, rye or buckwheat was eaten. Their drink was usually what nature provided: milk, beer and cider, for as early as 1654, laws were made regarding the sale of strong beer and cider, and there was no tea or coffee during the seventeenth century.

Their table ware was plain: wooden and pewter platters, pitchers, plates, pans and spoons were often seen, and sometimes wooden trenchers were used for plates, though some of the planters brought from England, silver plate, such as silver tankards, beakers, flacons, spoons, cups, knee and shoe buckles and buttons. A little later the "Silver Luster Ware" was brought over and it is now eagerly sought for. It looks as bright as silver, but is made of platinum on pottery ware, probably in Newcastle or Shelton, England, and has not been reproduced in modern imitation (so says Mr. N. Hudson Moore).

They also brought household furniture and wearing apparel, and there are still preserved some specimens of rich lace ruffles, fine embroideries and ornaments of gold and silver, which have been handed down in some families, for many succeeding generations.

Small clothes for men, made of raccoon, wolf, bear, deer and sheepskin, as well as cloth, were made to fit very closely to the person, and the long stockings worn with them which came to the knee, were secured by buckles, while shoes with silver or brass buckles completed the outfit. The doublet, which was early used, was like a vest, worn double for greater warmth and the coats were long in front, below the knee, and fastened to the very bottom, the skirts of which were made very full and hung off by being stiffened with buckram. They had a narrow hem at the neck instead of the broad collar and sometimes they were decorated with gold lace, which showed off to great advantage. The fine linen stock, was fastened with its large silver buckle at the back of the neck. Sometimes cloaks were worn, which were usually red, and hats were made of wool and beaver, high-crowned with the brims about six inches broad. This inconvenient width probably caused the fashion of turning them up at one side, and then on the other, till about 1730, when a third side was turned up, thus making the three cornered, cocked hat worn by gentlemen at that time.

Watches, rings, ear-rings and thumb-rings were also worn by the men. The wigs worn in those days were of various colors and sizes, they were made of horse and goat's hair and even the locks of children were cut off. Some wore them white and flowing, and others in long curls upon the shoulders. The women dressed in garments made from wool, while hemp and flax produced lighter weight goods for summer. As their circumstances increased and became better, the richer fabrics brought from England were purchased, and silks and satins were in great demand. Trailing gowns from a half to a yard and a half long, trimmed with flounces, and often trolloped

(fastened up) at each side were worn, while later hooped skirts that stood out at the bottom like a wheel were the fashion, but these were very inconvenient for passing through doors, both at home and at church, and was managed by a sleight of hand performance. Tall head dresses ornamented the head, having one streamer hanging down at the back, till the time of the Revolution, and later, smaller ones were made of crepe, lace or muslin. There were no wheeled wagons until the middle of the eighteenth century, and but very few until after the Revolutionary war. Chaises were first used, having only two wheels, and wagons painted red, made heavy and strong, came into use also. Men rode on horseback and even a bridegroom must carry his bride home on a pillion behind him.

The preparation of fires was no light task, in these old stone fire-places. The foundation was a backlog, two or three feet in diameter, usually hauled to position on skids or rollers; in front of this was the "fore-stick," considerably smaller, both lying on the ashes; on them lay the "top stick," half the size of the back-log, and all these were usually of green wood. In front of this pile was a stack of split wood, branches, chips and cobs. If fire-dogs were used, the smaller wood was placed on them. These logs lasted several days, were replenished when necessary, but the fire was not allowed to go out; should this happen, the fire-pan was sent to the nearest neighbor for coals, or the flint lock, musket and wad of tow, was called into requisition.

Floors were of oak, ceilings left unplastered, with the oak summer trees smoothed and left bare. In the best room and chambers, these were covered with pine. The tables in common use were long, of pine wood and made without leaves. The chairs, wooden or splint bottomed. The best room had rush bottomed chairs with bannister backs. The trusty and useful fire-locks, with their powder horns, hung on the walls. The dresser (like an open cupboard) shone with silver and pewter. The tall clock and "chest of drawers" brought from

England graced their respective corners, with an occasional chest of later date. The light stands were of the same shape, or oblong. The loom, the spinning wheel, the big wheel, quill wheel, reel and swifts, all were kept near for immediate use. The flax-brake, swingling knife and coarse hackle were kept in the barn for the men's use in rainy weather, while the little wheel and cards were the grandmother's chief care.

The early public days were the Fast and Thanksgiving. The General Court issued an order in 1676 for a Fast to be held every month, but the regular one was not appointed till after the Revolution. The people met for public worship as on Sunday, no food was cooked or eaten till after sundown, but Thanksgiving was the grand festival of the year. The first appointed in Connecticut was on Sept. 18th, 1631. It was held on Thursday, and generally late in the month in which it occurred. The days, for several weeks previous, were full of work for all the household, in anticipation of the return of all the children and grand-children of the family, and then families could boast of fifteen or seventeen children and as many as one hundred grand-children, who were all to be fed with the best the house afforded, and so the fatted calf was killed, the finest turkeys and chickens were picked, and the fairest pumpkins and vegetables, were gathered for the day's use, and when it arrived, great was the rejoicing as the dear ones gathered home. The first part of the day was spent in going to meeting, by all that could be spared from the preparations of dinner, which was served to them upon their return, and eaten with a relish, after thanks had been given. The afternoon was spent in games and stories of bear and wolf hunts, Indian wars, rattlesnakes and everything which had given variety to their lives the past year. In the evening, the old, well-worn family Bible was brought and laid on the little stand, beside the one tallow candle, and the grandfather read and returned thanks to God, for His care during the year. Though this was the annual festival and feast, still there were other merry-makings,

weddings, huskings, apple-parings, quilting parties, and neighborly gatherings around the great winter fires, where games were indulged in, besides sleigh-rides, balls, and "Suzy Bentley's," where Fiddler Bill played for the dancers. The whole expense of the amusement was paid by the young people, and did not usually exceed a dollar or two, out of which the fiddler was paid, and yet the older ones declared, "They should be ruined by such extravagance."

The custom at funerals in those times was to give gloves, rings, and scarfs. They were even distributed at the burial of the town's poor, and the expense was charged to the town.

In the wills of those early days we read, in one, "There were mourning suits to be given to his friends." In another, the will of a young lady, only twenty-one years old, who was engaged to be married, in which she directed, "that at her funeral, my betrothed husband, John Morgan, be all over in mourning and follow next after me."

In 1820, we read in the bill of expense for a funeral the following items :—

5 yards Cambrick for grave-clothes, One dollar.

For digging grave, One dollar.

For one gallon of spirits for funeral, One dollar.

And so we get a glimpse of some of our ancestors, while of many others scarcely anything is known beside the meagre notice in the records of birth, marriage and death.

#### REVIEWS AND TRAININGS.

The annual reviews and trainings which we have heard our fathers and grandfathers tell about, was to teach military tactics, and the yearly review was in the fall, when all the companies met together. On the first Monday in May occurred the yearly training, when one company assembled and the officers who had served three years resigned, and new ones were appointed.



The yearly regimental review was quite the event of the autumnal season and hundreds of people gathered to see the military display. Ten companies, consisting of eight militia, one artillery, and one rifle, assembled from Stonington, North Stonington, Ledyard, Groton and Voluntown, with all their officers. The colonel, lieutenant-colonel, major and staff of four men, all rode horseback, with feathers in their hats and epaulettes on their shoulders. The artillery, rifle company and officers were in uniform, but the men in the militia companies were not compelled to wear uniforms, but were required to have a gun, bayonet, and cartridge box. The review lasted all day, and the men got their dinner at a hotel or under a tent that was sometimes used. The captain put them through the military drill, the loading and firing was quite an art, and took considerable time. The rule for orders were:—

Attention, every man in the position of a soldier.

Face to the left.

Prepare to load (drop the gun, muzzle up).

Open pan (open the pan in the gun).

Handle cartridge (take the cartridge out).

Tear cartridge (hold with the teeth and tear off the top).

Prime (put in the powder).

Shut pan (close up the powder in the gun).

Enter cartridge (put it in the gun).

Draw ramrod (pull up the ramrod).

Ram cartridge (push down the cartridge).

Return ramrod (put it up).

Ready (take up the gun).

Aim (point gun). FIRE.

In these days of rapid action and self-loading rifles these preparations would seem most tedious, but with these old-fashioned flint-lock guns, it was all necessary.

#### SCHOOLS OF YE OLDEN TIME.

Through the kindness of Rev. H. Clay Trumbull, we have the

following description of the "schools of ye olden time" in Stonington. Public schools, or common schools, were not known in Connecticut, as they now exist in every community, in the first quarter of the 19th century. Before that time schools with paid teachers were common. A man teacher usually felt it his chief business to be feared for severity and the use of the switch. He did little real teaching, although he heard children recite lessons, memorized from their books, while he punctuated imperfect recitations, with a box on the ear, or with a blow from his switch. Women, no better qualified, had their "Dame Schools," where younger girl pupils went. I have heard my grandmother and mother tell of these schools in Stonington which they attended. "Master Niles" was a terror to his pupils, for he used his switch without mercy, and with little regard for their good. At last the oppressed pupils determined to teach him a lesson. One evening they entered the school room after school hours; the boys, assisted by the girls, ripped open the cushion in the big arm-chair of Master Niles; they then put in a good number of pins, with the points upward, and the cushion was then arranged as before, and the room was left. The next morning, when the punctual pupils were in their seats, Master Niles entered the room and settled himself in his arm-chair, but he came up quicker than he went down. With a yell, he bounded from his chair, and used various irreverent words. *That*, was a memorable day in this school. Master Niles was never, after that, quite so firm in his seat. He felt that he must be careful not to exasperate his pupils too much, and they felt easier in consequence.

A teacher in a "dame school" in Stonington used to tell her pupils to bring her sugar and eatables from their homes, and she threatened to punish them severely, if they told of it to their parents. This continued until they learned the truth, and the teacher was dismissed.

It was about 1830 that "infant schools" were introduced

into the country from England. Children who had never before been deemed of a school age here, went to these schools. One of them, taught by Miss Grace Stanton of Wethersfield, was held in Stonington. I attended it, when so young that after my lessons I would be laid on a pillow, on a bench in the school room to sleep, other pupils did similarly. This school was held in a room on Main street, above Harmony street, also in a room down Wall street, on the east side, which we used to call Dr. Palmer's lane, there was a choice select school, kept by a Miss Allen. I attended that. It was held in the other half of a house occupied by Mercy Golden. Later there was a school-house built on the lower part of the lot or garden of my father's house (the "Thomas Swan house"), which was burned. Miss Rider, daughter of Hiram Rider, of Willington, Conn., taught it for some time. Then Miss Frances Wentworth, sister of Rev. Dr. Erastus Wentworth, of Stonington, taught the school.

Mr. John Kirby, who married a sister of Elisha Faxon, Jr., taught a select school of a high grade. My brother, James Hammond Trumbull, went there, as did Samuel Babcock, and others of that age. Messrs. Davis and Dawes succeeded Kirby as teacher there, and such a school was for a time taught in a room above Allen's tin-shop, on the corner of Main and Harmony streets. A select school for young girls was for a time taught by Miss Maria Hubbard, in a little room in the rear of Dr. George E. Palmer's house. After a while the old Stonington Academy was occupied by Daniel S. Rodman, and then by William W. Rodman, assisted at times by Nicholas Chesebrough. John Terrett, Frederick Denison, and Elias Hinckley. Again, L. L. Wild taught in the Courtlandt Palmer house. Later he taught in Lord's Hall, and some of my best training was secured in that school.

The educational influences in Stonington were good, and many of us have reason to remember that gratefully. Dr. David Hart trained many a young man for college, in the room

above Dr. Hart's office, and Miss Lucy Ann Sheffield taught from generation to generation of the Boro children, and later kept her school on Pearl street, until too old to teach any longer. She is well remembered by many in the Boro, and the sound of her crutch coming was enough to bring the greatest rebel to his senses.

#### NAMING THE CROSS STREETS.

Rev. Mr. Trumbull also tells of naming the cross streets in Stonington, which may be interesting to know about in days to come.

“The cross streets were named about fifty years ago by some of the young men of that day, in a spirit of fun, but they “stuck.” *Broad street* was so called because it was wider than most. *High*, because that in front of the Wadawanuek Hotel was the highest part and sloped both ways, east and west, and towards the south. *Pearl street* was from a girls' school kept there, possibly by Miss Lucy Ann Sheffield. *Grand street* was our finest street at that time. It swept from Mr. Samuel Denison's hill past the academy, crossing both Main and Water streets, to the water. Along it were the houses of Mrs. Maria Babcock, Capt. Stiles Stanton, and Mr. Giles Smith, with the granite post surmounted by the bomb, as a memorial of the attack of 1814. *Church street* was from a colored family that lived on the corner of Water street, as it was before the day of the Episcopal church now standing on it. *Union* is a short street uniting Main and Water streets. *Harmony* had reference to a family that lived on it. The father, when excited by liquor, was very ill-natured, and my uncle, J. F. Trumbull, told often of seeing the old man in a village store until late in the evening, when he would say, “Well, it is time I returned to my cottage of peace and contentment.” An hour later you could go by that house and hear the wife screaming, while her husband dragged her around by the hair of her head: hence the name. *Wall street* was on account of the high bank wall,

extending almost the whole way from Main street to Water; its continuation to the east shore was nicknamed "Shinbone Alley." What is now *Cannon square* used to be "Town Landing," where the farmers brought their stock and produce to those engaged in the West India trade. It was the busiest part of the town then. *Diving street* was so called from its being a fine place to bathe, and all the boys congregated there in the hot summer days. This was the last street in the village in 1850.

#### STONINGTON BATTERIES.

(As given by Dr. George D. Stanton.)

A rough fort, or water battery, was erected during the Revolutionary war in the southern part of the village, on the east side of the Point, about where the fish market now stands. It had several long six and nine pounders and one twelve pound carronade. After the war they became dismantled and sunk in the ground. The old barracks stood between the present Baptist church and the Fanny Keen house, now moved away. They were altered into a dwelling house, which was afterwards burned. At a session of the General Assembly in New Haven, Dec. 14th, 1775, it was ordered that the battery at Stonington should have six cannon, two eighteen pounds and four twelve pounds. There was much delay in procuring them, and much dissatisfaction in consequence, and, in fact, some of them never did get here. They were used to defend New London and Groton, and when the fleet finally came here, in 1814, they had only two eighteen pounders, which had been sent here in 1809, and one six-pounder and one four-pounder. They carried part of these to the old fort on the east side, and the rest they took to a slight battery put up near the breakwater, just south of the present Atwood machine shop, and there, as we know, they did good work in keeping off the enemy. The earthwork was made somewhat in the form of a crescent, about ten feet

long, six feet high, and twelve feet across, in a line as nearly east and west as the curved form of construction would allow. The guns stood upon a plank platform, and were worked into position after the recoil occasioned by firing, by means of tackles. The entire force that occupied the fort to work the guns was fourteen men. At every fire the wheel of the gun carriage was marked with chalk, and also a mark on the plank platform. When we found the shot struck the brick perfectly, we kept the gun exactly on those marks, and I never before or since saw such accurate firing from cannon, said Mr. Silas E. Burrows.

---

POETRY COMPOSED UPON THE BATTLE OF  
STONINGTON,

*On the Seaboard of Connecticut,*

BY PHILIP FRENEAU.

*In an attack upon the town and a small fort of two guns, by the  
Ramillies, seventy-four gun ship, commanded by Sir Thomas  
Hardy : the Pactolus, thirty-eight gun ship : Despatch,  
brig, and a razee or bomb ship, August, 1814.*

---

Four gallant ships from England came,  
Freighted deep with fire and flame,  
And other things we need not name,  
To have a dash at Stonington.

Now safely moor'd, their work begun,  
They thought to make the Yankees run,  
And have a mighty deal of fun  
In stealing sheep at Stonington.

A deacon then popp'd up his head,  
And Parson Jones's sermon read,

In which the reverend doctor said  
That they must fight for Stonington.

A townsman bade them, next, attend  
To sundry resolutions penn'd,  
By which they promised to defend  
With sword and gun, old Stonington.

The ships advancing different ways,  
The Britons soon began to blaze,  
And put the old women in amaze,  
Who feared the loss of Stonington.

The Yankees to their fort repair'd,  
And made as though they little cared  
For all that came—though very hard  
The cannon play'd on Stonington.

The Ramillies began the attack,  
Despatch came forward, bold and black;  
And none can tell what kept them back  
From setting fire to Stonington.

The bombardiers, with bomb and ball,  
Soon made a farmer's barrack fall;  
And did a cow-house sadly maul,  
That stood a mile from Stonington.

They killed a goose, they killed a hen,  
Three hogs they wounded in a pen—  
They dashed away,—and pray what then?  
This was not taking Stonington.

The shells were thrown, the rockets flew,  
But not a shell of all they threw,  
Though every house was full in view,  
Could burn a house at Stonington.

To have *their* turn they thought but fair,—  
The Yankees brought two guns to bear,

And, *sir*, it would have made you stare,  
This smoke of smokes at Stonington.

They bor'd Pactolus through and through,  
And killed and wounded of her crew  
So many that she bade adieu  
To the gallant boys of Stonington.

The brig Despatch was hull'd and torn,  
So crippled, riddled, so forlorn,—  
No more she cast an eye of scorn  
On the little fort at Stonington.

The Ramillies gave up th' affray.  
And, with her comrades, sneaked away.  
Such was the valor on that day  
Of British tars, near Stonington.

But some assert on certain grounds  
(Beside the damage and the wounds).  
It cost the King ten thousand pounds  
To have a dash at Stonington.

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO THE COMMANDER OF THE SHIP MINERVA.

The following letter contributed by Mr. Thomas S. Collier in the "Collector" contains the instructions of the owners of the Minerva, sent to the commander of that vessel before she sailed on the cruise that resulted in the capture of the British Ship Hannah.

Boston, May 27th 1781.

SIR: The private armed Brig. Minerva, mounted with sixteen six pounders, which you are commissioned to command on a cruise against the enemies of the United States of America, being now completely equipped and ready for sea, you will embrace the first favorable wind to get out, taking every proper precaution to avoid the British Fleet, should they be off your port as heretofore. Your cruising ground we leave the choice of to you, only would observe that it is our wish, you should not cruise off either



New York or Charlestown, the danger appearing much greater than the prospect of advantage in that quarter. If you are fortunate eno' to take any prizes, you will order them into this port. Should they by distress of weather arrive at any out port, you will direct the prize masters to give me information by express of their situation and follow such directions as I may think best for our interests, with regard to such prize. With my best wishes for your success, victory and safety, I am, in behalf of the owners of five eights of the P. Brig. Minerva,

Your most affectionate friend and brother,

ADAM BARBOCK.

P. S. On coming home off your cruise I would advise you to keep well to the eastward so as to come in thro' the Vineyard Sound, where you can get the needed information of the situation of the British Fleet. As soon as you get to New London, you will lose no time in clearing the vessel for a second trip.

Once more sincerely yours,

A. B.

Dudley Saltonstall, Esq. Commander of the private arm'd Brig. Minerva, laying at New London.

#### DEATH OF THE INDIAN CANONCHET.

On April 9th, 1676, Canonchet was found on the Pawcatuck or Blackstone River near the village of Pawcatuck. Hubbard's account of his capture is as follows: "One of the first Englishmen that came up with him was Robert Stanton, a young man that scarce had reached the twenty-second year of his age, yet adventuring to ask him a question or two, to whom this manly sachem, looking with a little neglect upon his youthful face replied, in broken English, "You much child, no understand matters of war, let your brother or your chief come, him will I answer." When told his sentence was to die, he said, "He liked it well, that he should die before his heart was soft or he had said anything unworthy of himself." He was shot under the eye of Denison, and the friendly Indians were his executioners," and the following are a part of some lines written by Richard S. S. Andros.

On his conquerors he gazed  
With a proud and haughty air,  
And his eye with a flame of hatred blazed,  
Which shook the boldest there :  
And a bitter smile of scorn  
Around his dark lip played,  
While his brow like a cloud by thunder torn,  
Wore a deep and fearful shade.

“ Go bid your chief attend !  
I have no words to spare,  
No breath in idle talk to spend  
With children, as ye are,  
Though captive and in chains,  
Though fettered every limb,  
While a drop of royal blood remains,  
I speak with none save him.

Ye say my doom is death !  
Strike, not a moment spare,  
I ask ye not for another breath !  
I have no need of prayer !  
Death ! Death ! I like it well !  
Ere my heart be soft and tame  
Ere my breast with a thought or feeling swell,  
Unworthy of my name.

## AN INDENTURE.

This Indenture, made this 26th day of April, in the year of our Lord 1830, between Joshua Yeomans of Stonington, father of Mary A. Yeomans, his daughter, a minor under the age of twenty-one years, of the one part and Joseph Robinson of said Stonington on the other part, witnesseth :

That the said Joshua Yeomans hath placed and bound his said daughter, Mary A. Yeomans, an apprentice to the said Joseph Robinson to be instructed in the art, mistry, trade and occupation of house wifery and spinning, sewing and knitting, until she arrives to the

age of eighteen years, if she should live till that period, and that the said Joseph Robinson, on his part doth covenant and agree to and with the said Joshua Yeomans, father to said Mary A. Yeomans, to instruct said Mary A. Yeomans in the art and trade aforesaid by the best means in his and his wife's power, and teach her to read and write an intelligible hand and to feed said girl with good and wholesome food and comfortably clothe her and the said Mary A. Yeomans shall faithfully serve the said Joseph Robinson and obey him and his wife in all things that is lawful, and when she has served her time out, the said Joseph Robinson shall give her two suits of good common clothes for every day and a good handsome suit and bonnet for Holy days, also a good pair of common shoes, and a good pair of meeting shoes and let her go free. It is further understood by said parties that if said girl does not stay with the said Robinson, or is hindered by her mother so that the said Robinson cannot be benefited by said girl, then this Indenture to be void and of no effect:

In witness whereof we have here unto set our hands and affixed our seals the 26th day of April, 1830.

#### EMANCIPATION.

Before the Revolution and even for some years after, slaves were owned by various families in Stonington, and many of them were freed by their desire and that of their masters. On the Records are found the legal proceedings which was necessary. The first names of the blacks were given but the last was usually that of the family to which they belonged, for instance, Zilph, freed by Hannah Avery, Flora, freed by Amos York, Primus Noyes, freed or emancipated by Peleg Noyes and Rena, emancipated by Paul Wheeler, in this manner runs the legal document :

“ Whereas Paul Wheeler of Stonington, County of New London, hath this day made application to us the Subscribers, Justices of the Peace, for said New London County and the selectmen of said town of Stonington, for the time being, for liberty to emancipate his negro wench, named Rena, and the said authority and selectmen having examined said Master and Servant, and find it to be the desire of the master to emancipate, and likewise the desire of said wench to be emancipated, and on examination, finding the

wench to be about 34 years of age, well and healthy and capable of getting her living, therefore give said Paul Wheeler liberty to emancipate, and he is hereby authorized to emancipate and make free the said Rena.

Dated at Stonington, January 10th, 1803.

---

LOCATION OF THE OLD HOUSES.

- The first Bentley house was just south of Mr. Charles Champlin's house.
- The first Baldwin house was built down the lane, about half a mile southwest of Mr. Frank Smith, on Taugwank hill.
- The first Bennett house stood a little to the east of the house now occupied by Mr. Charles Bennett, at Wolf Neck.
- The first Billings house stood on the top of Cosadue Hill, in North Stonington, which was then Stonington.
- The first Breed house in town was just west of Mr. Henry Breed's house, in Breed Town.
- The first Lynn Brown house was situated north of the late Samuel Bentley's house and the house now owned and occupied by Miss Bertha York, nearly on the line between North Stonington and Stonington.
- The first Chesebrough house was near the present residence of Mr. Irtis Main, in Wequetequock.
- The first Clift house was at Old Mystic, on the turnpike, near the Hyde Mills, and is still standing.
- The first Cobb house stood where Mr. Daniel Brown now lives.
- The first Collins house was below the house of Mr. Dudley Brown, on the south side of the road, over the wall on the Mystic road, above the oak tree.
- The first Copp house is the present Copp house, near Copp brook.
- The first Davis house is the present one in Pawcatuck.
- The first Dean house was at Quiambaug, east of the quarry there.
- The first Denison house was just west of the present old Denison house.
- The first Eells house is on Hinckley hill.
- The first Fanning house was situated southwest of the home of Miss Emma A. Smith, on the Stanton land.

- The first Fellows house was at Stonington, near the end of the point, and had the old windmill there.
- The first Fish house was situated on the road from Old Mystic to Lantern Hill, where you cross the line from Stonington to Ledyard. This same John Fish was the chosen schoolmaster for the town of Stonington in 1679.
- The first Frink house was east of Mr. Latham Miner's house, on land now owned by Mr. Fernando Wheeler, and stood in the second lot just over the wall.
- The first Gallup house was situated east of the Lewis house, above Greenmanville.
- The first Grant house was where Mr. Orrin Grant lived and died.
- The first Haley house was north of the present home of Mr. John Chesebro.
- The first Hallam house is the home of Judge Gilbert Collins, near Stonington, and there was also an old Hallam house a little west of the house of Mr. Nat. Noyes, at the Harbor.
- The first Hancox house stood east of the Borough of Stonington.
- The first Hazard house was where Mr. Erastus Miner now lives.
- The first Hewitt house stood on the Elm Grove Cemetery land, at Mystic.
- The first Hilliard house was at the road where Mr. Frank Noyes lives.
- The first Holmes house stood in North Stonington, near the "Bloody Six" school-house, which was then Stonington.
- The first Kellogg house is near Old Mystic.
- The first Mason house was situated east of Pequotsepos brook, on land now belonging to Mr. Benjamin Hewitt.
- The first Main house was a little east of the village of North Stonington.
- The first Miner house was at Wequetequock, a little east of the late Mr. Harry Hinckley's house, but in a year or two he built the second at Quiambang.
- The first Noyes house was at Anguilla, near the small red house now standing.
- The first Page house is the present one now occupied by Mr. James A. Lord, near the Road Church.
- The first Palmer house was at Wequetequock, east of the Cove.

- The first Park house was on the western slope of Quaquataug hill.
- The first Phelps house was at the foot of Cosadue hill, where Mr. John York now lives, which was then Stonington.
- The first Prentice house stood where Mr. William Prentice lived for many years, near the northeast corner school-house.
- The first Randall house stood a few rods west of the old home of Darius Randall, between North Stonington and Westerly.
- The first Rhodes house is the present one standing beyond Anguilla.
- The first Robinson house stood where Mr. Daniel Brown's house now stands.
- The first Rossiter house is where Mrs. Thomas Palmer lives.
- The first Russell house is the present one occupied by Mr. Joseph Noyes.
- The first Searl house was just west of Sylvia Mills.
- The first Saxton house was situated on the road to Stonington, east of the Charles M. Davis farm, and nearly opposite the new quarry.
- The first Stanton house was at Pawcatuck Rock, near Mr. Charles Randall's.
- The first Stevens house stood where Mr. Pitts Frink died, near the present North Stonington boundary line.
- The first Stewart house was north of Stewart Hill, in what is now North Stonington.
- The first Swan house was on Swan Town Hill, now North Stonington.
- The first Thompson house was where Mr. Eugene Palmer lives.
- The first Wheeler house was on the site of Col. James Brown's house.
- The first Whipple house was built north of the house now occupied by Mr. Ezra Cuff, in Flanders, on the east side of the road.
- The first Williams house was near old Mystic, and his cousin, John Williams, lived at the same time on the Griswold farm, now owned by Dea. B. F. Williams.
- The first Witter house was a little north of Col. James Brown's.
- The first Woodbridge house in this town was built at White Hall, near old Mystic.
- The first York house was built at Anguilla, on land which Mr. William York now owns, and near the house which he now occupies.

FAMILY NAMES FOUND ON OUR EARLY RECORDS, WHICH  
ARE NOW NEARLY OR QUITE EXTINCT IN STONINGTON.

Amos, Ashcraft, Badger, Bell, Button, Bloggett, Bowdish, Bartlett, Brand, Bolles, Brooks, Buchway, Barot, Brackenbury, Cady, Cale, Caye, Carder, Curtice, Clesbey, Cozens, Caldwell, Church, Charte, Cables, Cross, Caffee, Carling, Cranston, Carter, Cruzer, Curtis, Davison, Dennis, Dudley, Darrow, Downing, Dye, Earle, Eddy, Elliott, Ellis, Fellows, Fanning, Ford, Force, Fisk, Fling, Goodwille, Gibbons, Gager, Gallea, Galloway, Gambal, Gifford, Goddard, Gustin, Hallett, Halsey, Hollyoake, Hopkins, Herrick, Howland, Hamilton, Hobs, Hudson, Ingraham, Irish, Jamison, Jacques, Juell, Keizer, Kimball, Killom, Kegwin, Lambert, Lawrison, Leeds, Lester, London, Low, Lippincott, Lynd, Morehouse, McCarty, Meacham, McDowell, Mott, Moxley, Neff, Newell, Nutter, Page, Palmetter, Pike, Plumb, Pooler, Pickles, Person, Pierson, Richards, Rockwell, Ruff, Saxton, Searle, Seter, Seabury, Sprague, Sterry, Starkwether, Stockwell, Straton, Stoyell, Swayt, Udall, Utey, Vanpelt, Varian, Weaver, Willett, Wottells, Woodhouse, Wiat, Willey, Widger, Woodburn, Woodman, Worthington, Wight, Yerrington.





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